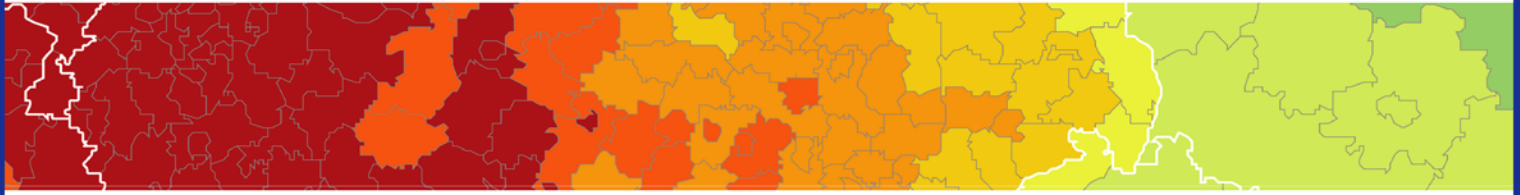


**Inspire policy making by territorial evidence**



# COMPASS – Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe

Applied Research 2016-2018

**Final Report - Additional Volume 6  
Case Studies Report**

## Final Report - Additional Volume 6 – Case Studies Report

This applied research activity is conducted within the framework of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme.

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**Final Report - Additional Volume 6 - Case Studies Report**

# COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe

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This document is an additional volume of a final report.

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The final version of the report will be published as soon as approved.

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# COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe

## Case Studies Summary Report

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## Abbreviations

CEEC	Central and Eastern European Countries
CEF	Connecting Europe Facility
CP	Cohesion Policy
EC	European Commission
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
EGTC	European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
EU	European Union
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
PHARE	Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies programme
TA2020	Territorial Agenda 2020
ROP	Regional Operative Programme
TG	Territorial Governance



# 1 Introduction

One of the three aims of the COMPASS project is to study in detail how EU Cohesion Policy (CP) and national systems of spatial planning and territorial governance interact and to identify good examples of sound interaction on the ground. The focus is very much on the praxis of these national systems, and the mutual relationship with a key area of European territorial governance: Cohesion Policy. The main objectives of the case studies were:

- to investigate and analyse the relationship between CP and spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice;
- to identify good practices in case study areas for cross-fertilisation of spatial and territorial development policies with CP.

The case study regions were chosen according to a careful selection procedure. The selection was not restricted to countries where CP plays a key role, but also included some where its importance is relatively lower. The case studies include a variety of spatial planning models. The analyses focused on two areas:

1. the practice of spatial planning systems and territorial governance as a foundation for an efficient and effective absorption of resources;
2. the influence of Cohesion Policy on planning systems and territorial governance.

In a first phase, 13 countries or cross-border regions were selected. An important criterion was the regions' implementation of Cohesion Policy objectives. In the second phase, a more detailed selection of regions was made. The main selection criteria were:

- the range of policy-making cultures;
- key governance characteristics using the typology proposed in the ESPON TANGO study;
- the regions' challenges in relation to the TA 2020 thematic issues (see Table 1.1); and
- their exposure to different objectives of the EU Cohesion Policy: convergence; regional competitiveness and employment; and European territorial cooperation.

The case studies are located in four countries and one cross-border area (Table 1.3).

*Table 1.1. Relationships between TA2020 priorities and challenges of spatial planning and territorial governance*

<b>TA 2020 priorities</b>	<b>Challenges of spatial planning and territorial governance</b>	<b>Thematic issues</b>
Promote polycentric and balanced territorial development	Concentration of economic development in capital and 'core regions', competition between cities and towns, suburbanisation	Polycentricity and suburbanisation
Encourage integrated development in cities, rural and specific regions	Development of peripheral, isolated and less-populated areas	Peripheries and other specific regions
Territorial integration in crossborder and transnational	Transborder planning and governance	Cross-border regions

functional regions		
Ensure global competitiveness of regions based on strong local economies	Support for specific local assets (including renewable energy sources and tourism potential)	Support for the local economy
Improve territorial connectivity for individuals, communities and enterprises	Relations between spatial and transport policy, spatial planning alongside transport corridors	Transport infrastructure and accessibility
Manage and connect regions' valuable ecological, landscape and cultural features	Planning in areas enjoying protection of the natural environment	Natural and cultural heritage

The information collected in each of the case studies included:

- a national profile and an overview of the selected thematic issues (across the country, or in a limited territory depending on the exact limitation of the case study area);
- two to six examples in different thematic issues (at least one for each of the selected issues) which are the most relevant in terms of the connection between Cohesion Policy and territorial governance/spatial planning;
- 'good practice' in cross-fertilising Cohesion Policy with spatial planning/territorial governance, including the level of support from the EU cohesion fund; and the potential to transfer practice to another country.

Three main methods were used to collect information about the case studies:

1. desk research: review of policy documents connecting Cohesion Policy and sectoral policies closely related with spatial planning; and in-depth description of policy, project or programme according to a standardised format;
2. semi-structured interviews with key-players, such as policy-makers, representatives of national authorities, non-governmental actors and practitioners;
3. a focus group workshop in each region based upon a guidance note regarding the content of the topics to be covered as well as the desired composition of the focus group.

The case-study surveys were performed in September 2017. Reports from the case studies were prepared for each country, with a supplied template. Difficulties arose with the assembling of participants for the workshops, so in some cases the focus-group questions were integrated into the semi-structured interviews. Table 1.2 presents the number of interviewees and participants of focus group workshops.

*Table 1.2. Numbers of interviewees and participants of focus group workshops*

<b>Countries/ cross-border case studies</b>	<b>Number of interviewees</b>	<b>Number of participants of focus group workshops</b>
Pyrenees (Spain/France)	9	-
Sweden	9	-
Poland	6	47
Hungary	8	4
Ireland	9	-
<b>Total:</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>51</b>

Table 1.3. Matrix for the final selection of case studies

Countries/ cross- border case studies	Geographic dimension	Typology of territorial governan ce	Regions for case studies		Thematic issues						Converge nce objective s	
			Name	Code	Polycentricity and sub- urbanisation	Peripheries and other specific regions	Cross-border regions	Support for the local economy	Transport infrastructur e and accessibility	Natural and cultural heritage		
Cross- border: Pyrenees (Spain, France)	South/West	II/IV	Nouvelle Aquitaine	FR61			Ex/P				E	
			Basque Country	ES21								
			Navarra Huesca	ES22 ES241								
Sweden	Scandinavia	I	Stockholm	SE110	Ex				Ex	Ex	R	
			Östergötland County	SE123		Ex/P			Ex		Ex/P	R, E
Poland	Central/East	III	Mazowieckie	PL12	Ex/P					Ex	C	
			Podlaskie	PL34		Ex/P					Ex	C, E
			Łódzkie	PL114					Ex	Ex		C
Hungary	Central/East	III	Közép- Magyarország	HU10	Ex/P						R	
			Baranya	HU23 1		Ex					Ex	C, E
			Győr- Moson- Sopron	HU22 1			Ex/P					C, E
			Borsod-Abaúj Zemplén	HU31 1					Ex		C, E	
Ireland	West/ Atlantic	II	Eastern Midland			P			Ex	P	R	
			Northern and Western			Ex			Ex			R
			Southern							Ex		R
Thematic issues cover					3	5	2	6	5	3		

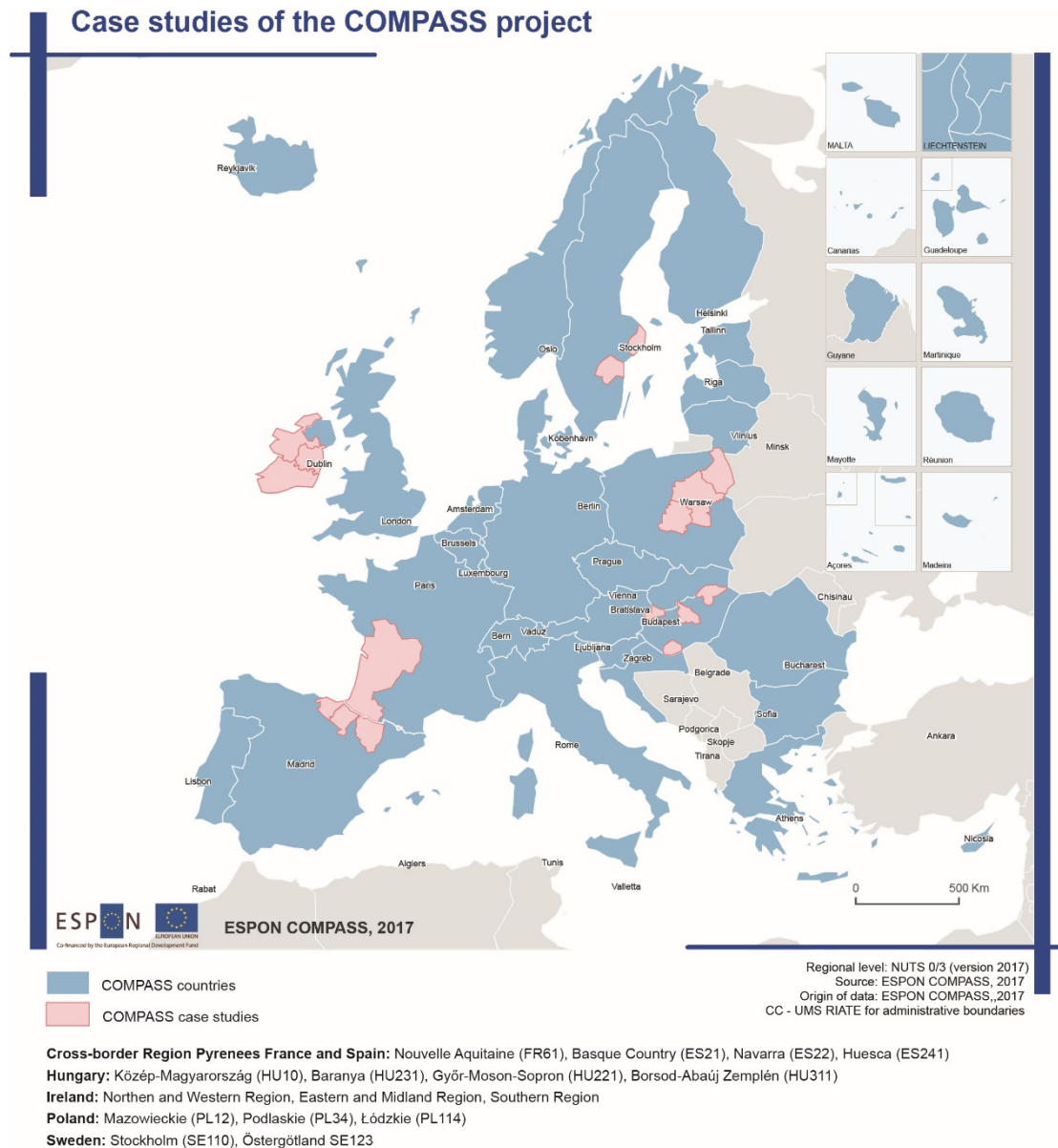
\* **Ex** – studied examples, **P** – good practices to study (all cross-border examples and good practices are treated as one)  
**C** - Convergence, **R** - Regional competitiveness and employment, **E** - European territorial cooperation

To provide for close study of the interaction between CP and spatial planning/territorial governance, the cases selected were regions at NUTS2 or NUTS3 level. Table 1.4 presents the description and main issues of the analysed case-study regions.

Table 1.4. Descriptions of case studies

<b>Country / case study regions</b>	<b>Main characteristics</b>	
<b>Spain-France</b> Nouvelle Aquitaine, Basque Country, Navarra, Huesca	The cross-border regions include densely populated coastal areas, rural mountainous areas with low densities as well as surrounding large cities in the piedmont. The territory faces diverse challenges: remoteness, isolation, low access and lack of basic services and infrastructures; vulnerability to the effects of climate change and natural hazards; high concentration of economic activities in the service sector which is dominated by small enterprises, often unstable and seasonal; large differences in population densities, both between urban and rural areas, as well as between different regions.	
<b>Sweden</b>	Stockholm	The Stockholm region is quite prosperous in terms of economic activity, including a high employment rate, increasing population, high levels of innovation and a diverse economy. The northern parts experience an economic growth resulting in a strong economic and transport corridor; whereas the southern parts, traditionally more dominated by consisting of a larger share of manufacturing, are vulnerable due to de-industrialisation and out-sourcing. This is strengthening the north-south divide. Planning challenges revolve around facilitating economic growth, transportation and housing supply along with improving environmental conditions.
	Östergötland County	Östergötland is a (semi) peripheral region in eastern Sweden, fourth largest in terms of population size. In terms of economic activity, the region is slightly above the EU28 average (GDP per capita in PPS). The region has a diverse economic structure although dominated by agricultural and forestry. There are two main cores, Norrköping and Linköping and a unique coastline in the east, including an archipelago. Region deals with issues of a more regional scope, such as urban-rural interactions, attracting people and enterprises, developing public transportation, strengthening the economic cores and developing outer regions based on their local assets.
<b>Poland</b>	Mazowieckie	Mazowieckie is the most diversified region in Poland in terms of socio-economic development. It has well developed service, industrial and agriculture sectors; the metropolis of Warsaw is a pole of growth. The settlement system is unbalanced in terms of demographic potential and supply-demand on the labour market, resulting in strong commuting. Divergence increases as a result of the outflow of population to Warsaw metropolis, with the omission of large and medium-sized cities, endangered with severe depopulation.
	Podlaskie	Podlaskie Voivodeship is situated peripherally in the north-eastern part of Poland. The region, characterized by the lowest population density in Poland, is bordered by Belarus and Lithuania; the agro-food industry is the main branch of its economy. The region is unique in terms of natural and cultural heritage which are of European importance scale. The region has experienced a very high emigration rate; rural areas considerably depopulate, as this is selective the demographic structure is becoming unbalanced and further depopulation is expected.
	Łódzkie	Łódzkie Voivodeship is characterised by a medium level of economic development. The region is internally diversified and the diversification of the economy is increasing. There are several functional areas in Łódzkie which face different socio-economic problems. The economic potential of the Voivodeship comprises of a high level of industrialization (the highest share of industry in the GVA generation in Poland). Łódzkie is relatively well-served by the road network; a great advantage is its location on the crossroads of two TEN-T corridors. A major shortcoming of the existing road layout is its bad technical condition.

Figure 1.1. Selection of case studies



## 2 Policentricity and suburbanisation

### 2.1 Matters arising from the thematic issues

Polycentric development was recognised as one of the major policy aims in all of the case studies analysed (Table 2.1). However, the settlement characteristics varied between regions.

The main problems are as follows:

- Suburbanisation is mostly significant in the larger urban areas (PL, SE, HU). In some cases, municipalities are key players for promoting and implementing the desired development (SE). In other cases, spatial policy's emphasis on the largest urban centres has deepened spatial polarisation of the country or region (PL, HU)
- National and regional planning documents consider polycentric development as a spatial strategy to tackle spatial disorder and uncontrolled suburbanisation, for which they define regional cores. Planning and strategic documents at local level define strategic cores in the vicinity of transport nodes. Nevertheless, balanced territorial development is difficult to achieve in cases of malfunctioning land control systems. Central eastern European countries usually set out common goals of promoting polycentric and balanced territorial development and preserving compact cities in national or regional level documents. However, land-use development activities do little to assist the achievement of these objectives. Moreover, powerful investors tend to influence the provisions of land-use plans, while previously released state regulation reduces possibilities to prevent urban sprawl (HU, PL).
- Two trends occur in parallel: the densification of urban areas close to transport nodes and the concentration of population and economic activity in urban space; and processes of suburbanisation (PL, HU, SE). Urban development in peripheral and sparsely populated areas is a concern, not only confined to peripheral regions, as there are also peripheries within regions or agglomerations (hidden suburbanisation).
- Various challenges associated with polycentric development occur in less-urbanised areas. They may have a lack of critical mass in terms of size and population; a dispersed settlement distribution; and poor accessibility (IR, SP-FR, PL). Polycentric and balanced development would require an improved system of transport infrastructure.

*Table 2.1. Level of importance and impact of CP on the thematic issue of Polycentricity and suburbanisation*

Thematic issues	National		Regional		Local	
	Level of importance	Impact of CP	Level of importance	Impact of CP	Level of importance	Impact of CP
Sweden	3	1	2-3 (regional variations)	2	3	1
Poland	3	1	3	2	2	3
Hungary	3	1	2	1	1	1

### 2.2 Relationship between Cohesion Policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice

The degree of CP impact on territorial development was markedly different between countries. In Sweden, the EU policy related to policentricity and suburbanisation issues has

been absent from planning documents, though the EU discourse was present at local and regional level (e.g. with indirect support of the European Security and Defence Policy). Polycentricity principles were also present prior to the EU accession. On the other hand, while the beneficiaries of CP recognized the influence on the spatial planning system, they did not assess it positively. New tools were introduced with CP support (supra-communal/regional/territorial development planning documents or agencies) aiming for rational investment and economic efficiency. In practice, however, they mostly served to prepare the programming period, while the development activities of local actors were not coordinated. They could be characterized as a 'struggle for resources' resulting in local improvements instead of more balanced regional development.

The aspect more strongly influencing spatial planning systems and territorial governance was dependence on the Structural Funds. In the case of regions with a relatively high GDP per capita (like Budapest and Warsaw), the available EU subsidies for the whole region decreased, producing internal conflicts and a willingness to disconnect from the related agglomeration. This would reduce the capacity to cooperate between local actors, with actual strengthening of urban sprawl processes. What is more, competition between underfunded actors for supplementary resources may weaken cooperation in the public and private sectors. This suggests the need for projects that require common actions from various actors (e.g. good practice: RTI in Siedlce).

A positive impact of CP on more balanced and compact development could be observed in the support of land consolidation programmes (albeit with effects still negligible and hard to assess), infrastructural projects (like a suburban railway and a P&R system), and the development of educational and sporting facilities, as well as the encouragement of increased settlement density in the vicinity of newly-built objects.

On the other hand, the relative ease with which the EU funds may be acquired has resulted in the oversupply of infrastructure investments (e.g. in sewerage and transport infrastructure); an increase in areas for building development; and excessive dispersion in built-up areas. If such an oversupply of infrastructure occurs beyond the existing urban fabric, dispersion and suburbanisation are stimulated.

## **2.3 Recommendations**

- Spatial planning systems and territorial governance have direct and clear implications when it comes to the promotion of polycentric and balanced territorial development. However, other policy areas can also prove useful in influencing polycentric development and in managing urban change. Examples might concern the planning of transport infrastructure, or the management of peripheries and other specific regions (via inner-suburbanisation).
- Characteristics of suburbanisation processes vary between beneficiaries of CP. The scale of the phenomenon is unique in Poland, where built-up areas are spreading in a disorderly and dispersed manner. EU policy has not yet contributed to a more balanced

and 'place-based' development, since the allocation of EU funds has not been sensitive to inter-country and inter-regional differences. Moreover, the logic applied has been mainly sectoral, albeit with strong decentralisation in metropolitan areas with significant investment pressure.

- A mechanism for bottom-up cooperation and cooperation between neighbouring spatial units is needed. Adoption of the thematic development programmes can be assessed as a good example of the bottom-up approach, recognising the combined interests that generated joint actions. What is more, integrated regional investments have proved efficient tools at local level, strengthening cooperation between actors.
- In countries with malfunctioning spatial policy, implementation of policies and plans needs reinforcement. Clear guidelines (and strict land-use regulations) need to be laid down for the rational allocation of EU funds and the evaluation of real needs (land balance, forecasts, financial implications of urbanisation). Otherwise, CP implementation might produce unintended effects, such as hidden suburbanisation of inner peripheries in the context of revitalisation processes; oversupply of technical infrastructure resulting in excessive allocation of land for development (urban sprawl); and strengthened processes of suburbanisation.



### 3 Peripheries and other specific regions

#### 3.1 Matters arising from thematic issues

Peripheries and other specific regions, especially at the regional level, represent an issue of moderate/high importance in European countries, whether these are or are not embraced by CP (Table 3.1). Development in peripheral areas is a matter of common concern in the EU, as relates, not only to peripheral regions (from the national point of view), but also to peripheries within regions (even in metropolitan areas like a capital-city region).

*Table 3.1. Level of importance and impact of Cohesion Policy on the thematic issue of Peripheries and other specific regions*

Thematic issues	National		Regional		Local	
	Level of importance	Impact of CP	Level of importance	Impact of CP	Level of importance	Impact of CP
Sweden	3	2	3	2	3	1
Poland	3	3	3/2 (depending on region, and more important in weaker regions)	2	2	1
Hungary	2	2	3	2	2	1
Ireland	1-2	2	2-3 (depending on type of agency involved)	2-3 (depending on type of agency involved)	2-3	2-3

The managing of peripheries interlinks strongly with other thematic issues, as transport infrastructure and accessibility; support for a local economy; and natural and cultural heritage. It extends to several policy areas and seeks to solve general problems, encouraging integrated development. Problems identified in peripheral areas are as follows:

- Peripheral regions are often the weakest in a given country, suffering from structural problems, and in an unfavourable economic situation, with lacking Foreign Direct Investments (FDI); delayed infrastructural projects; non-innovative industry; and long-term unemployment;
- These regions also face challenges with depopulation (in rural areas); an ageing population; and loss of skilled young people to urban centres;
- The regions are mostly rural, with small and weak economic centres. Their main asset is a high share of areas of high ecological value; representing exceptional local assets in some cases;
- They have a reduced demand for commercial and public key services and an impaired intraregional connectivity; and

These challenges tend to be distributed unevenly across the peripheral regions. Territorial governance issues usually render the situation more complex. Spatial planning needs to find ways to strengthen the region's competitiveness, using the existing local potential and identifying practices to overcome difficult issues, by way of: a) the activation of local actors to

participate in projects and develop strategic documents; b) the compliance with requirements for the maintenance of areas in a region of high natural value; c) the relatively high overall costs of territorial governance; and d) a proper balance between the reduced demand for public services (schools, childcare and transport) and the delivery of essential services, as the accessibility of the region.

### **3.2 Relationship between Cohesion Policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

In practice, the evaluation of the relationship between CP, spatial planning systems and territorial governance represents a very complicated aspect of analysis, in view of the complexity of the issues related to the development of peripheral areas. However, some differences in spatial planning systems and territorial governance among EU countries may have implications for the management of spatial development in peripheries.

The studied regions place different emphasis on the importance of a spatial perspective for issues of regional development. For example, in Sweden, the non-statutory regional spatial strategy aims to add a spatial layer to the regional development programme through a spatial interpretation; while in Poland, implementation of the Regional Operational Programme (ROP) stimulates spatial development through the application of appropriate spatial criteria for evaluating new EU-funded projects.

In peripheral regions a move towards a comprehensive area-based approach has been observed. Integrated development in cities, rural and specific regions needs to be encouraged, not only at regional and municipal level. There are also some central incentives or initiatives promoting horizontal cooperation for the preparation of documents of strategic, operational/interventional or regional-development-related nature. In Hungary, for example, the county concept forms the basis for the Integrated Territorial Programme, relying on strong central coordination and involvement of the county in implementation work. This shares some similarities with the Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) under the Cohesion Fund,

A further aspect to the relationship between CP and spatial planning is the institutionalisation of communication between local actors, designed to facilitate the preparation of instruments and spatial development in collaboration with municipalities' programmes of integrated development (community-based planning). However, in some cases local communities do not become involved in topics of local development. For example, in Ireland, though the planning system introduced a non-statutory pre-consultation phase, many communities did not contribute with ideas or visions for spatial planning.

### **3.3 Recommendation**

The results of case studies involving the thematic issue of peripheral areas and other specific regions suggest the following key recommendations:

- In the development of rural areas, problems should be addressed by means of comprehensive programmes, under a place-based approach. Development and implementation of integrated programmes of a comprehensive nature must be based on local capacities characterised by accountability and continuity, with involvement in planning, programming and implementation, and avoiding a constant re-design of the system of regional development.
- General improvements in education and (vocational) training might improve the capacity of local people of becoming aware and involved in local development challenges. Capacity-building within community groups, NGOs and voluntary groups should be promoted.
- A wider and fuller understanding of the idea that rural policy goes beyond agricultural policy is needed. Shrinking rural areas imply changes in land use which need monitoring.
- Peripheral regions, almost by definition, have a favourable natural environment which needs to be maintained and developed in a sustainable way.
- Lagging regions have a strong need of a more systemic approach, especially in terms of territorial governance and CP interactions, avoiding non-coordinated actions and projects leading to dissipation. This can be addressed through formal planning instruments, at both local and regional scale, for example taking advantage of joint comprehensive plans (horizontal cooperation).
- Horizontal cooperation, but also vertical cooperation (via a top-down approach) has great significance in peripheral areas. Regulatory national interests might be utilised to identify and highlight primary local assets, e.g. environmental protection functions, with EU funding also used to ensure that local specificities act in support of territorial cohesion in a region, as well as structural change.

## 4 Cross-border regions

### 4.1 Matters arising from the thematic issues

A significant role of cross-border spatial planning has been revealed in the five case study regions. Specific issues have been identified in the areas adjacent to the external border of the European Union, where problems of cross-border relations coincide with a high level of peripherality. The extent and success of cross-border cooperation, including coordination of spatial planning, are often influenced by natural similarities, the existence or not of common functional areas, as well as historic and cultural factors. On the other hand, the content of cross-border cooperation is widely influenced by regional geographical specificity – e.g. involving mountain areas and border rivers – as well as settlement aspect – as with borders in the vicinity of metropolitan areas like Vienna and Bratislava – isolated rural settlements – e.g., in mountain areas, for instance in the Pyrenees. Main problems in border areas are described below.

- Cross-border areas are sometimes more exposed to environmental risks and natural hazards, as administrative obstacles may delay response to emergencies or disasters;
- EU structures – Euroregions, INTERREG projects – is very important stimulating cross-border cooperation and establishing its spatial dimension. Without CP support, there may be a breakdown of the cooperation mechanisms that have developed over the years, with re-peripheralisation of extensive areas a possible consequence.
- Borderland zones are often areas of low population density, low industrial activity, but at the same time of high natural value. This is particularly true of mountain areas – such as the Pyrenees – but also areas in which a border has long played a highly formalised role conducive to limited human interference in the natural environment, as e.g. in the Polish-Belarusian borderland. Particular challenges are then laid before spatial planning, which has to simultaneously stimulate development and counter the threats to natural heritage. Even with attempts to integrate planning between two sides, issues associated with environmental protection are not always addressed integrally. An example of this is the Pyrenean Strategy for the valorisation of biodiversity, only in force on the French side of the border;
- Low levels of population density and larger distances to urban cores increase the demand for a fair access to services of general interest. In cross-border areas, spatial planning involves the development and extension of services of general interest, e.g. joint healthcare emergency services in Serdania, in the Pyrenees. This is of particular importance, especially where the border makes a complicated cut across the local settlement system, e.g. the Spanish enclaves created on French territory in the Pyrenees.
- The role of the institution of cross-border cooperation and its EU support is of particularly great importance in the case of large differences between the spatial planning competencies of the administrative units in neighbouring countries.
- Domestic regulations – e.g. on insurance for people driving machines, or the functioning of public transport – can benefit or hamper the effectiveness of cooperation initiatives undertaken in a spontaneous way (bottom-up) by local units or community groups.
- Many initiatives concern the extension of bilateral linear infrastructures to improve spatial accessibility. At the same time, the quality of transport linkages is largely influenced by

the public transport offer, often fairly poor. In central eastern European countries, this has undergone further deterioration, even in a period during which EU financial resources were available.

#### **4.2 Relationship between Cohesion Policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

Regional organisations dealing with cross-border cooperation have an impact on the allocation of resources under the INTERREG project. Cross-border cooperation affects different sectors – culture, environment, tourism, research, mobility, transport, economic development, rural development, emergency services, etc. – but it rarely adopts an integrated approach to cross-border spatial planning. The cooperation remains predominantly sectoral, also within the Schengen zone. Spatial planning fails to perform an integrating role, in the case of external interventions/actions at the cross-border dimension. The priority axes of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) (INTERREG V) programmes concentrate primarily on crucial sectoral problems – e.g. transport, climate change, and natural hazards – in the clear-cut territorial dimension. Simultaneously, spatial planning does not contribute to the creation of separate axes, as cross-border sectoral coordination is not the goal of CP. Nevertheless, in some cases, joint planning – e.g. for climate change adaptation or protected areas – might be an outcome of a long tradition of joint INTERREG cross-border cooperation.

However, CP in borderland areas is of vital significance, not only where direct financial support is concerned. CP also plays a highly important role in encouraging partners to cooperate, as it is endorsed by the legitimacy associated with EU support. In this way, CP creates essential conditions for future cross-border connections over the long term.

The participation of the authorities at national level in cross-border cooperation may be of positive value, affording better coordination and allowing for co-utilisation of national funds and EU support. But it may also pose certain threats. Neighbouring countries often have differing priorities for cross-border cooperation. Moreover, sectoral regulations at the national level are not always compatible with the local reality, e.g. regulations concerning railways lines of the Intercity type vs. the needs of a local labour market for transport services. Disparate ownership status of economic entities of a given type – on both sides of a border – are another potential challenge, as CP beneficiaries should be units of local governance, state companies, or private businesses. Example of this is the market for transport services in the borderland between Hungary, Slovakia and Austria.

Other discernible problems are the legal and administrative discontinuities and the lack of knowledge concerning the competencies of local authorities and other units located on the other side of the border. This hampers access to vital information – e.g. to meteorological data, in the context of adaptation to climate change. Mutual knowledge of the institutional system existing on the other side of the border should constitute the basis for effective cross-border spatial planning.

On the EU's external border, a closer integration of strictly cross-border activities – supported by ETC programmes – is required, together with internal measures financed with resources stemming from other Operational Programmes. Other programmes – e.g. ROPs in east Poland – frequently offer greater opportunities. Priority axes of these programmes sometimes – mainly alongside the external EU border – do not match with those of INTERREG cross-border programmes in the same region. Inside the EU, more integration can be expected as countries and regions increasingly cooperate in strategies for larger territorial areas, such as macro-regional or sea-basin strategies. This requires both vertical cooperation – at local and regional levels – and horizontal cooperation – between regional authorities, institutions managing the ETC projects, sectoral institutions, foreign units/entities in countries from beyond the EU – what poses exceptionally difficult institutional challenges.

### **4.3 Recommendations**

To enhance joint spatial planning perspectives in cross-border contexts, the following suggestions are made:

- National authorities should establish an 'intergovernmental commission' (or equivalent) with appropriate resources to achieve accelerated resolution of certain administrative and operational deadlocks obstructing cross-border activities. Local joint actions involving regulatory planning are much obstructed by administrative mismatches.
- National and regional authorities should use EGTCs and other cross-border entities as knowledge pools and facilitators of soft cooperation. As they are dedicated to cross-border or transnational cooperation, EGTCs can be identified by project holders as legitimate contact organisations. The case studies show that an EGTC can do much to enhance the fast and efficient delivery of cross-border projects.
- Local and regional authorities should support small-scale and grassroots actors willing to cooperate through (1) appropriate project engineering structures, located as close to the need as possible, which can orientate and support 'would-be' project holders in their search for financial sources (on the sub-regional scale) and (2) micro-funding for small projects to kick-start cooperation and provide for experimentation / feasibility studies.
- National and European authorities will need to give consideration to changes of area functions in reflection of ongoing spatial processes in a neighbouring country e.g. suburbanisation spreading beyond state boundaries. Cross-border areas of this type, as in the Vienna-Bratislava-Gyor triangle, may require greater support than it is possible with the funds currently available within the framework of ETC programmes. Better coordination and joint spatial planning is essential.
- For European and regional authorities, CP ought to ensure that support is offered to these instruments and projects as separate priority axes, providing a basis for spatial planning at the cross-border dimension. This includes the creation of joint planning documents, systems of territorial monitoring – as for example in Navarra – and through other entities collecting data covering the spatial aspect, as climate change observatories.
- For European and National authorities, it is expedient to strive for enhanced coordination of activities between ETC projects and other EU Operational Programmes. This is in particular true of measures undertaken in the areas adjacent to the external border of the European Union.

## 5 Support for the local economy

### 5.1 Matters arising from the thematic issues

National experts consider support for local economies as an issue of moderate importance in European countries (Table 5.1, Table 7.1). It is a rather general theme that incorporates different policy areas and strongly links with other thematic issues, as peripheral and central areas, and rural and urban areas. Examples of the problems encountered in the studied areas are the following:

- The separation of responsibilities for economic development and spatial planning lead to insufficient coordination between spatial and economic issues. Likewise, the non-spatial approach to regional planning produce strategies without an appropriate reflection of the internal diversification of regions;
- Insufficient coordination and complementarity between different sectoral policies supporting regional and local development;
- Multiplicity of strategies created for overlapping areas with a view to EU funds being obtained, with the potential distortion of the idea of strategic planning;
- Centralisation and top-down approaches of policies important for local development;
- Unintended spatial consequences of intervention in local economies, especially if spatial plans are lacking; and
- Unpreparedness and inefficiency of spatial planning systems for the development of new sectors of the economy, e.g. wind energy.

*Table 5.1. Level of importance and impact of Cohesion Policy on the thematic issue of Support for the local economy*

Thematic issue	National		Regional		Local	
	Level of importance	Impact of CP	Level of importance	Impact of CP	Level of importance	Impact of CP
Sweden	1	1-2	2	2	3	2-3
Poland	2	2	2	3	3	3
Hungary	1	2	2	2	2	2
Ireland	1	1-2	2	2	3	2-3

### 5.2 Relationship between Cohesion Policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice

There are large differences between central eastern and western and northern European countries on the support for the local economy. For example, the impact of CP on support for the local economy in Sweden was described by country experts as ‘of little importance’; while in Poland and Hungary its importance is described as strong or moderate.

Member states introduce different planning instruments in support of local economies in areas with specific needs. For example, Hungary established ‘priority regions’ on the basis of the Regional Development and Spatial Planning Act. Spatial plans are adopted by the Parliament and acts and special institutions (councils) are set up with state coordination to develop areas. In the case of the Tokaj sub-region, a national programme was adopted to allocate

funds in support of the local economy. Furthermore, special development concepts and programmes are elaborated for such areas, as a basis for the pursuit of CP and getting European funds.

Polish regions established the so-called Functional Areas, an example of territorial approach to governance. Local authorities and other stakeholders from an area cooperate, identify common socio-economic problems and challenges, and create strategies for development. Common problems offer a foundation for cooperation for local development, irrespective of administrative borders. There are also other types of areas – like Strategic Intervention Areas – in which territorial instruments are put into effect e.g. Integrated and Regional Territorial Investments. These examples of territorial, functional and network-related approaches to planning and governance inspired by European policies, are relatively new in the central and eastern European countries (CEECs), but increasingly implemented.

There are several examples of regeneration processes in areas with specific needs, as pursued on the basis of European co-funding. A Polish case study involving the city of Łódź offers a positive example of relations between CP, spatial planning and territorial governance. The possibility of EU funding being raised for revitalisation proved motivating for local authorities in their dealings with local spatial planning. Local spatial plans were adopted after a long time without plans, considered as a major problem in the city centre. A Revitalisation Committee consisting of different stakeholders (NGO, residents, entrepreneurs, etc.) was set up, and a Local Programme of Revitalisation adopted. The result was the successful implementation of several major EU-funded investments.

Positive aspects of the participation of non-governmental stakeholders were also mentioned in an Irish case involving Dublin, and the regeneration of the Ballymun housing estate. However, Ballymun CP-supported regeneration represents a rather unsuccessful example of planning, as economics risks were not taken into account in the regeneration masterplan. When the economy crashed, many key infrastructural investments relying on PPP were not pursued. Despite some improvements in housing and physical infrastructure, the socio-economic situation in the area remained poor.

The Swedish case study involving the Stockholm region also offers an interesting example of territorial governance since it involves collaboration between different actors, including local and regional authorities, as well as scientific and business institutions, leading to the preparation of a Innovation Strategy for the region. This project was a positive initiative to build the relationship between economic and spatial planning, in which the spatial planning authority also took part. The examination of the other Swedish case study involving Östergötland led to an emphasis on collaboration between actors to make the region more attractive for the local economy.

The Swedish case studies show other examples of the integration of regional policy and spatial planning. In the Stockholm region, an authority responsible for development issues



and the authority responsible for spatial planning collaborated in the devising of a regional development plan that is both a regional plan for the purposes of the Planning and Building Act and a regional development programme under the so-called Regional Growth Ordinance. In Östergötland, the regional administration joined 13 municipalities in developing a planning document that adds a spatial layer to the regional development programme, and promotes a functional approach to planning.

### 5.3 Recommendations

- There is a need to build closer connections between development policy and spatial planning e.g. via the integration of regional policy documents and spatial planning instruments. Spatial planning instruments should be used to coordinate the different policy fields which together define local development. Improved policy integration should be supported, as it remains insufficient across Europe. Spatial policies and plans, even simplified, are necessary to steer local development and prevent unintended consequences of intense economic intervention and development.
- As CP is pursued, more and more emphasis should be placed on the functional diversification of regions. Territorial complexity and complementarity of interventions under different sectoral policies in the functional areas should in particular be promoted, while interventions should be treated as a spatial system.
- CP should promote governance practices based on territorial cooperation and stakeholder networks. Examples of such practices have gained positive assessments from national experts. Processes of 'citizen and stakeholder engagement in the planning process, generally *to facilitate more engagement*' are present in this thematic issue, and are especially important because of its local character.

## 6 Transport infrastructure and accessibility

### 6.1 Matters arising from the thematic issues

In most countries, the development of transport infrastructure is dependent on the spatial planning system. This determines the infrastructural configuration of national and regional significance (strategic documents) and regulates the local course of linear investments (local planning). Moreover, in countries that are beneficiaries of CP, a large part of transport investments are pursued with the support of the European Structural Funds. CP overlaps with transport policy, and spatial planning has often proved unprepared for such a significant intensification of investments.

Among the case studies examined, the thematic issue of 'transport infrastructure and accessibility' was assessed in Poland – central and eastern European countries – in Mazowieckie and Łódzkie Voivodeships–, Ireland – in the Southern Region, Cork –, Sweden – in the Stockholm region – and Hungary – in the Győr-Moson-Sopron county.

The key importance of this thematic issue was emphasised in the studied countries at all geographic levels (Table 6.1), and especially at national level. Dissimilar assessments were observed at local level, with a less-pronounced role attributed to transport and accessibility in Ireland and Hungary. The impact of CP was clearly most significant in Poland and Hungary, and in Ireland at national and regional level. Lesser significance to EU support was only reported in Sweden. In all four countries, the role of CP has been on the decline, while simultaneously moving from the national and regional scale towards the local.

Table 6.1. Impact of Cohesion Policy on the thematic issue of Transport infrastructure and accessibility

Country	National		Regional		Local	
	Level of importance	Impact of CP	Level of importance	Impact of CP	Level of importance	Impact of CP
Sweden	3	2	3	1	3	1
Poland	3	3	3	3	2	2
Hungary	3	3	2	2	1	1
Ireland	3	3	3	3	1-2	1

Challenges linked to this thematic issue are:

- The impact of CP support for transport infrastructure and accessibility has been uneven in CEECs. The development of the road network has been more coherent and has brought specific improvements of spatial accessibility. But considerably less success has been achieved in the development of the rail network. In some cases, spatial planning procedures were needed for new regulations to refine the implementation of investments in transport. In Poland, most new roads, railways and other facilities have been based on these instruments. Change in legislation has improved the investment process, but simultaneously 'detached' infrastructure planning from other forms of land management,

in particular the construction of new housing and commercial centres, which are large traffic generators.

- At local level, instruments for the development of infrastructure have had a poor impact. In large cities, problems are also generated by outdated local spatial management plans developed before the availability of EU supported investments. They are now an obstacle to changes in communication priorities, such as preferences in public transport, and cycling infrastructure.
- The liquidation of certain planning services in CEECs during the 1990s in order to break with the centrally planned economy, severely constrained the development of transport networks. After 2004, these services had to be re-established.
- In most of the examined countries, the distribution of competences for the construction and maintenance of transport infrastructure is very diverse. The responsibility for the latter is distributed among different actors from the local to the national level, depending on several factors such as ownership of roads, type of infrastructure, etc. The delegation of all these responsibilities and related ones – e.g. spatial objectives – varies even between regions within one country, as in Sweden.

## **6.2 Relationship between Cohesion Policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

The impact of CP on the development of transport networks can be evaluated positively, particularly at the macro-scale. Although funds were gained for the implementation of many projects, the inertia in the implementation of system solutions has remained. CP promotes the development of large transnational projects, while regional and local level networks remain member-state priorities.

The approach towards CP investments in transport infrastructure in the new accession countries was often reactive. It was necessary to create new instruments for spending EU funds. These were endorsed, but they were based on existing funding capability rather than long-term spatial development needs. The special road and railway acts in Poland have accelerated investments, but have at the same time contributed to a reduced significance of the local plan when it comes to the determining of the final courses of new routes. Such a pattern results in conflicts, especially of a social background. Typical NIMBY effects have been observed on a regular basis. Residents' associations question environmental decisions, most often by seeking out minor errors of a formal nature. On the other hand, the most significant positive impact of CP on the process of spatial planning in the new accession countries that experts point to involves the development of both consultation and mediation procedures.

The role of the planning system as a barrier to the efficient implementation of CP transport projects was most evident in urbanised areas, especially those in the vicinity of major cities. The suburbanisation process has had a direct impact in making the implementation of transport projects more difficult. A significant constraint on the implementation of transport (particularly public transport) projects has concerned difficulties with cooperation between municipalities of a metropolitan area or even between FUAs around medium-sized cities.

Certainly a desired solution enforcing such cooperation has been the Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) system applied in the current programming period. In Poland, some regional authorities have allocated additional funds for Regional Territorial Investment (RTI), within the Regional Operational Programme operating around the Voivodeship sub-regional centres. This could be considered good practice (see Chapter 8 on Good practices).

In the case of new developments of more minor scale, including those located more peripherally, project selection often seems to give rise to doubts. For example, funds allocated to the modernisation of regional roads and railways were sometimes over-dispersed (as the result of some kind of egalitarianism whereby each part of a province deserves to receive some investment).

In the countries of EU-15, the issue of transport and accessibility includes the most evident relationship between EU policy and spatial planning and territorial governance, in the way that actors may apply for EU co-funding within the TEN-T programme, or through other EU programmes, rather than by influencing spatial planning systems or territorial governance in general. These programmes and co-funding are useful, and facilitate the implementation of certain infrastructure projects. In this context, the mechanism of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) emerged as particularly crucial. On the other hand, EU CP does not really have a bearing on decisionmaking at local level, although its significant role in ‘getting projects off the ground’ was acknowledged. In countries with a well-established local (land-use) planning position and tradition, it is not possible to modify transport investments from the European level.

To conclude, it can be assumed that, in the Western European countries, the role of CP in the development of transport and the improvement of spatial accessibility is limited to specific investments within the TEN-T network. At the same time, these investments are implemented as part of local planning systems, which might in some cases suggest a negative impact on the flexibility of solutions at the local scale. In the countries where CP is being implemented its impact is considerable. As the territorial planning and management system is not always prepared for investment on such a large scale, changes are required as the dedicated solutions are introduced. A further problem lies in cooperation between individual entities (including units of local government), which is indispensable in linear investments as well as in the development of public transport. Dispersion of competence in the area of development and the maintenance of transport infrastructure, as well as the functioning of public transport (including in cross-border areas) could be regarded as a pan-European problem.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

The results of the case studies dedicated to the thematic issue of transport infrastructure and accessibility sustain the formulation of the following recommendations:

- Multi-level governance becomes a prime concern in the transport thematic issue. Horizontal coordination between and within regions is also important, since regional authorities usually have different responsibilities and mandates for the planning and provision of infrastructure. This policy domain is characterised by parallel government arrangements, such as negotiation procedures between the state and local governments, which need to be adapted and related to the formal, and hierarchical, spatial planning system. Transport infrastructure should be seen as a tool for spatial planning and as a sectoral policy, in which spatial planning can be integrated and coordinated with other sectoral policies such as housing.
- Greater integration of transport policy with spatial planning systems is desirable. Transport policy must take a broader spectrum of territorially-oriented objectives into account. This should not be only to satisfy the increased transport demand of people and goods. In CEECs, the special solutions introduced during the 'investment boom' should be gradually integrated with the spatial planning system.
- The introduction of the CEF mechanism should be assessed positively, and its maintenance seems advisable. Concurrently, projects implemented as part of the TEN-T network ought to be assessed from the point of view of their integration with regional and local transport systems. For example, local plans should be assessed in terms of their preparedness for the 'adoption' of a large investment.
- Integration of investments at different levels – with special support for co-operating units, further development of IDI and RTI instruments – ought to be a particularly significant criterion when it comes to the selection of future transport projects.
- Access to CP support for major transport projects in metropolises must be flexible. This applies both to the criteria of profitable units (cities with high nominal GDP per capita may not be able to pursue large investments themselves, especially in public transport), as well as rigorous preferences only for specific modes of transport (intermodal solutions are often the only ones that can increase the system's efficiency).
- When transport and accessibility projects are involved, national planning investment agencies should plan the necessary requirements for inter-modal connections in advance of construction approval. This would reduce delays in the delivery of projects due to planning constraints.

## 7 Natural and cultural heritage

### 7.1 Matters arising from the thematic issues

Areas with valuable bio- and geo-diversity resources, with valuable landscapes, and especially those with rich cultural heritage, tend to restrict development to protect their assets. In the analysed regions these valuable features are perceived as an important factor underpinning regional and local development, which constitutes an endogenous potential for development. However, although these areas attract tourism, they fail to generate an adequate number of permanent employment opportunities, and they are frequently affected by depopulation. To improve, they require strategic interventions and external funding, including cohesion funding that meets criteria for sustainable development.

Generally, combining management over natural and cultural heritage poses certain difficulties due to the fact that these two fields are most often separate in terms of policy and legislation. When subjective scope (excluding spatial planning) is concerned, relevant legal regulations are divergent and usually dispersed.

Opportunities to integrate the protection of natural and cultural heritage, as well as the use of valuable assets and resources for sustainable development, revolve around elements as spatial planning and, to varying degrees, government and local-government policies contained in general documents (i.e. concepts, strategies and development programmes). Political documents and planning instruments underline the significance of valuable natural, landscape and cultural features, and also – with a given level of governance and planning – define areas for further protection, and provide other recommendations and regulations. Statutory and non-statutory documents and instruments perform discursive and coordinating functions in the process of governance and spatial planning. The latter play a vital role in the case of natural regions whose range is not convergent with administrative boundaries.

The role of spatial planning systems and territorial governance in the management of natural and cultural heritage has a strategic and regulatory character. However, it varies greatly in relation to a given issue and policy conducted by a given country, region or local authority.

In country or regional cross-border areas, problems sometimes arise out of divergent protection and development policies, *inter alia* manifested in a lack of well-coordinated policies and programmes of action, with a lack of compatible procedures of protection on the two sides of the boundary.

Difficulties with spatial planning are sometimes associated with securing satisfactory access to valuable natural or cultural heritage areas, especially if these are located peripherally, as well as with their development. Most spatial conflicts are generated by new transport developments that cut through valuable ecosystems and ecological corridors, or with the development of accommodation facilities and holiday/second homes in attractive areas, as

coastal and lakeside zones, or land bordering forests. Another problem is the fragmentation of ecological corridors and landscape by the ever-increasing pressure on the environment.

The regional and local levels are reported as the most important in issues of natural and cultural heritage (Table 7.1) in the process of territorial governance and spatial planning. In Hungary and Poland, the central level was estimated of lesser importance, perhaps due to the loosening of previous rigorous regulations for the protection of natural and cultural heritage. For instance, legal regulations adjusted to EU requirements in respect of established Natura 2000 network sites softened the rigorous protection approach of many areas, what was also reflected in spatial planning. Under the Polish system of governance, many competences were transferred from the central level to the regional or municipal levels. Its is difficult to have a precise evaluation of the importance of a given level, due to varying approaches to a given issue.

Table 7.1. The assessed importance of issues of natural and cultural heritage, along with the impact of Cohesion Policy

Country	National		Regional		Local	
	Level of importance	Impact of CP	Level of importance	Impact of CP	Level of importance	Impact of CP
HUNGARY	1	1	3	1	2	1
POLAND Natural heritage	2	2	3	2	3	2
POLAND Cultural heritage	2	1	2	1	2	2
SWEDEN	2-3 (thematic variation)	1-2 (thematic variation)	2-3 (thematic variations)	1	3	1

## 7.2 Relationship between Cohesion Policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice

Evaluation of the relationship between CP, spatial planning systems and territorial governance is difficult given the complexity of the problems involved. In general, CP supports actions to protect the natural and cultural heritage for achieving sustainable development. CP supports local development in areas of valuable environmental, landscape and cultural heritage, including peripheral areas affected by depopulation processes; areas struggling with unemployment; areas whose development is involved with the *Natura 2000* network; and areas of special protection at national and cross-border levels.

Analysis of the protection of the natural and cultural heritage in Podlaskie region (Poland) and in Baranya county (Hungary) indicates that the support activities within the framework of CP are often not systematic, but rather isolated and dispersed, and without spatial coordination. These problems are also valid in the agri-environmental programmes of the Podlaskie Voivodeship. Another issue is the neglected protection of landscapes surrounding historical sites. Remarkably, there is support for regional products, but absence of assistance for regional development.

In the case of Sweden, the role of spatial planning systems and territorial governance in protecting natural and cultural heritage was considered more significant than in other studied countries. The most important matter concerns appropriate control over the national interest in municipal planning, a high priority goal in the Östergötland region and the whole Sweden. High importance is attached in municipalities to the coordination of the regional development programme for regional transport plans and spatial planning. Attention is also paid to conflict management to reduce potential conflicts between development and protection.

Other important issues are associated with varying degrees of cohesion, primarily between Operational Programmes and instruments of spatial planning. For instance, in Poland, recommendations regarding protection plans drawn up for Natura 2000 sites are not always successfully integrated with municipalities' policies and plans. The weakness is the so-called planning protection of areas with highly-valuable nature, culture and landscape.

Summarising, in practical terms, it is possible view CP relating more to Operational Programmes than to spatial planning in matters of natural and cultural heritage. In contrast, OPs *per se* are generally related to regional policy, albeit to varying degrees.

### 7.3 Recommendations

- Areas with valuable resources of biodiversity, landscape or cultural heritage attract tourism, but usually fails to generate enough employment, or conditions conducive to local and regional development. They need to be approached in a special and strategic way, and to get external (CP) funding to support development and stimulating economic activity.
- In matters of natural and cultural heritage, CP, spatial planning systems and territorial governance should carry out a coordinated, integrated and systemic approach; devising innovative management mechanisms. Such valuable areas could receive a specified part of CP support as 'natural-cultural RIT (Regional Territorial Investments)'.
- The essential issue is the effective utilisation of spatial planning systems at all levels, as instrument for the integration of policies on natural and cultural heritage, and for better integration with CP.
- It is particularly important to increase cohesion between operational documents and spatial planning instruments, to improve cohesion of spatial planning with CP. Better cohesion should deal with general development programmes plans for transport, with spatial planning in municipalities, and with special attention to the reduction of potential conflicts between development and protection.
- Since the EU financial support to cultural heritage is often dispersed in isolated actions, it is indispensable to systematise the actions. For example, support for regional products should combine with support for the region in question; facility-oriented protection should be connected with landscape protection; and protection of the cultural landscape in conjunction with local development and environmental protection. The protection of natural heritage and valuable ecosystems should be protected entirely, via ecological corridors, areas whose development is protected by Natura 2000, unique and vulnerable ecosystems, and cross-border areas of high natural value.
- It is crucial to secure national interests in regional and local planning, and primarily in plans of a regulatory character.



- A partial strengthening of the law for the imposition of stricter regulations for protective purposes is desirable, in front of the trends of looser requirements vis-a-vis the protection of biological diversity and cultural heritage demand
- Broader involvement of citizens and stakeholders in the process of planning may help to manage conflicts between spatial development and the protection of natural, cultural and landscape heritage, with a view to ecological corridors and valuable ecosystems being safeguarded against fragmentation, as well as (in a broader perspective), against excessive tourism-related and recreational developments.
- More effective use of agri-environmental programmes to protect highly-valuable ecosystems requires the development of systemic mechanisms to support the protection of entire ecosystems, instead of isolated fragments. One possibility entails associations of farmers from given areas. The extension of coverage of hydrogenic habitats under agri-environmental programmes is recommended, including areas beyond *Natura 2000*.
- In the long-term, it is desirable to reduce the dependence from EU funds of actions towards these thematic issues.

## 8 Good practices

### 8.1 Identification of good practices

It was possible to identify 11 good practices (presented in Table 8.1); with several thematic issues. However, in most cases it was hardly possible to reveal practices of cross-fertilisation of CP with spatial planning/territorial governance. The number of good practices in each thematic issue were: polycentricity and suburbanisation (2), peripheries and other specific regions (4), cross-border regions (5), support for the local economy (5), transport infrastructure and accessibility (5) and natural and cultural heritage (3). The detailed descriptions of the good practices are as presented in the Country Reports.

*Table 8.1. Cross-fertilisation: Good practices identified in case studies regions*

No	Case studies	Good practice
1	Sweden	<b>Encouraging integrated development in cities: the example of Inner Harbour in Norrköpin.</b> Practice shows how EU policy through the Interreg programme contributes to the development of a new spatial planning instruments, enhanced citizen participation and communication between public and private sector.
2	Sweden	<b>Managing and connecting ecological, landscape and cultural values of regions in the Östergötland Archipelago</b> The practice is a combination of utilising different regional and spatial planning instruments to coordinate different policy fields, and to use EU programmes to explore innovative ways of addressing specific problems of spatial and territorial planning.
3	Spain-France	<b>Cross-border strategic planning in the Euroregion Aquitania-Navarra-Euskadi</b> The Strategy is a new instrument for strategic planning, that allows for the involvement of a large array of stakeholders and multi-level approach to development issues.
4	Spain-France	<b>Intelligent Territorial Monitoring in Navarra</b> A successful example of introducing a territorial perspective in regional policies, through the recommendations of the European Territorial Agenda 2020 and adding relevant territorial goals.
5	Spain-France	<b>Pyrenean Climate Change Observatory</b> Example of Interreg program's input for new forms of monitoring and relevant analytical work, as well as for an cross-border perspective in territorial monitoring.
6	Poland	<b>Regional Territorial Investment: Mazovian rail/road transfer node in Siedlce</b> A new instrument of a territorial approach to the region development through regional cooperation.
7	Poland	<b>Managing tourist product of The Augustowski Channel</b> An example of consistent implementation of a coherent vision for the cross-border development and revitalization, in cooperation with units on local and provincial level, bottom-up local initiatives, and inter-institutional cooperation between two countries.
8	Hungary	<b>Spatial planning on level in case of Budapest agglomeration</b> Implementation of the document gives a new example of a wide and stable cooperation and may serve as role model for later cooperation on agglomeration level.
9	Hungary	<b>Cross-border transportation system</b>

		A good example of joint, inter-institutional venture aiming to provide cross border transportation for local inhabitants.
10	Ireland	<b>Dublin Airport Terminal 2 expansion ('T2')</b> The example illustrates spatial planning practice in terms of complexity of delivering capital investment and negotiating large scale projects, facilitating stakeholder consultation, public participation and compliance with national and EU environmental impact and planning legislation.
11	Ireland	<b>Ferbane Development Plan, Offaly</b> Inclusive partnerships as part of good governance. An example of new modes of coordination or communication between local levels, public and private, and increasing importance of participation.

## 8.2 Selected good practices

Eight of the eleven good practices are presented below, to supply a broad range of examples of CP cross-fertilisation with planning and territorial management systems, in relation to local or regional challenges.

### 8.2.1 The coordination of spatial planning in the Budapest agglomeration, Hungary (polycentricity and suburbanisation)

Coordination in spatial planning in the Budapest agglomeration dates back to the late 1990s. The first development concept and development programme for the Budapest agglomeration came into being in 1999, having taken shape in close cooperation between different stakeholders of the suburban region, with the approval of the Budapest Agglomeration Development Council. The creation of the land-use plan for the suburban region adopted by the Hungarian Parliament in 2005 was also based on a region-wide consultation process with the local governments concerned. Despite all the differences and disagreements between Budapest and Pest County, effective cooperation in spatial planning has made progress since then. The spatial planning documents on different levels (of the NUTS2 region, the Budapest agglomeration, Pest county and Budapest city) have often set common goals, such as the promotion of polycentric and more balanced territorial development in the suburban region. Coordination of planning practice has frequently relied on informal cooperation between the experts involved.

A new chapter in spatial planning commenced with the pursuit of administrative reform in Hungary. Following the abolition of the Budapest Agglomeration Development Council and the NUTS2-level institutions (regional councils, regional development agencies), no formal institution has remained in place to coordinate spatial planning activity at the suburban level. Meanwhile, 2014-2020 EU regulations emphasise a place-based and integrated approach, and have introduced new tools facilitating regional coordination, particularly the ITI and CLLD. Although the Hungarian Government did not ultimately apply the 'integrated territorial investment' approach, and applied the CLLD in urban areas in an experimental manner only, the integrated approach has emerged in Hungarian spatial-planning practice. A new statutory local-level planning instrument has been introduced, in the shape of an 'integrated urban development strategy'. The Local Government of Budapest and the district local governments

also elaborated their integrated urban development strategies in 2013 (approved in 2014). In turn, Budapest reviewed its strategy in 2016. The document paid much attention to the territorial aspects of planned developments, focusing on areas of actions extending beyond district boundaries and influencing urban structure. It also promoted a proactive and coordinating role within the metropolitan region.

In line with this role, the Local Government of Budapest initiated coordination of planned interventions and projects on three pre-defined topics that had been laid down previously in the 'Budapest 2030' long-term development concept. These issues included the coordinated development of the Danube riverside, the rehabilitation of brownfield areas, and social urban regeneration. The initiative was based on the principle that an integrated strategy needs continuous cooperation and a working partnership between governmental, civil and economic actors. The planning exercise started in January 2014 and ran for six months, with the involvement of the Local Government of Budapest, the 23 district governments, Pest County, the authorities concerned, and a number of professional organisations. The aim of the process was the elaboration of thematic development programmes, which should be the basic documents laying down joint development directions, and serving in the identification and preparation of projects implemented using EU funding. The outcomes took the form of strategic documents with realisable goals, a planning process, programme implementation, and an agreement as to the most important brownfield and Danube area development projects for the upcoming seven years. These projects were also displayed on a schematic map of the city.

In line with a request from the districts and from Pest County, along with approval granted to the three thematic programmes, a fourth thematic document on economic development and job creation took shape in the first half of 2015. The six parties participating at expert level as the strategy was drawn up were the Budapest Local Government; the 23 district governments; the Government of Pest County; two State Secretariats of the Ministry for the National Economy; the Prime Minister's Office; the National Research, Development and Innovation Office; the Budapest Local Government Department's Employment Centre and eight entrepreneurial organisations, along with the Budapest Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The strategy had previously been debated and accepted by a decision-making body composed of the leaders (mayors and delegates) of the Budapest Local Government and the 23 district governments.

The planning process where the thematic programmes were concerned took the following form. The General Assembly of Budapest first set up subject-based working groups meeting every week. The basic function of the decision-making working groups was the management of the planning procedure and the adoption of programmes. The planning partnership began with analysis of the Budapest 2030 goals and assessment of the initial situation. In the course of the analysis, important challenges and useful potentials were discovered. The definition of a mid-term goal proved to be crucial. The next step was to determine perspectives that would

assist with decision making in relation to the most effective projects. The last phase entailed the discussion of projects, their modification and adoption, and the putting forward of suggestions for the final proposal. The social urban regeneration programme and the economic programme required different approaches. Once mid-term thematic goals had been determined, a second phase worked out principles and directives for project plans and their implementation. An action plan was also devised for the social urban regeneration programme in the third phase.

The planning process included measures reliant not only on the Central-Hungarian Regional Operational Programme, but also on sectoral OPs (e.g. Integrated Transport Development). This reflected the fact that their implementation links closely with the attainment of mid-term goals of the thematic development programme.

In the planning phase, a high level of public involvement was considered crucial. The continuously-updated [www.budapestfejleszt.es.hu](http://www.budapestfejleszt.es.hu) website helped with the project, providing information after every working group meeting, and also enabling the public to share their opinion about updated materials, while also remaining free to send in their own suggestions.

Another important tool informing the public was the 'Open Forum', held four times. Professional and civic organisations participated alongside public representatives. These people were each time informed of the current situation of the planning procedure, and had the opportunity to share opinions on the different planning points. These opinions were later incorporated into final results.

A study by the Ministry for the National Economy arrived at the conclusion that the thematic development programmes, as a new planning tool and cooperative planning practice, did represent a good model for later planning cooperation at the agglomeration level.

### **8.2.2 Regional Territorial Investment: the Mazovian rail/road transfer node in Poland (polycentricity and suburbanisation)**

The Regional Territorial Investment (RTI) represents a new instrument for a territorial approach to regional development. It was initially regarded as an 'experimental' mechanism intended to inspire local governments to jointly implement a number of investments forming a systemically (and functionally) cohesive project. In Mazowieckie Voivodeship, RTI is ongoing in the subregions of Płock, Siedlce, Ciechanów, Radom and Ostrołęka. The RTI leader in each subregion is its main city. The subregional centre is also intended to coordinate the investment plan for each RTI.

Investments planned under the RTI will be financed under the Regional Operational Programme for Mazowieckie Voivodeship (the budget being €2.1 bn). The planned operations will be implemented by either local governments or partnerships, which may be established in any form. Partnerships should be formed in response to common challenges, and the necessity for a collaborative vision of development to be enacted. The RTI projects are

intended to be of integrated form, meaning that these will be groups (bundles) of projects solving a given problem jointly, and supporting the development of a subregion.

Under the RTI, the European Commission introduced a tool known as the Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI), which serves the functional areas of cities. In Mazowieckie Voivodeship, there are ITIs for the Warsaw agglomeration (with a budget of €165M) and as of 2016, for Radom. The task of defining the functional area was assigned to the RTI leaders.

In line with guidelines from the European Commission and Ministry of Infrastructure and Construction, both the RTI and ITI are to act as tools for urban development, but in a functional sense, which is to say that administrative boundaries may be crossed, albeit within a given area whose limits can be justified on the basis of research and analysis. There are relevant documents at supra-local level, as well as studies and additional analyses.

To gain funding, projects take part in competitions announced specially for the RTI/ITI (within the so-called problem areas or Strategic Intervention Areas). Participation in these competitions does not preclude application for EU funds under other calls open to all.

Projects selected in the competition announced for the RTI resemble other proposals as they must receive a positive rating in line with the criteria adopted by the Monitoring Committee.

Although the list of projects implemented under the RTI and ITI in Mazowieckie Voivodeship is not yet closed (enrolment has been ongoing since June 2016), these instruments are good example of integrated spatial planning. Their most desirable feature is the location of new developments in connection with natural functional areas such as daily urban systems. This is crucial in terms of both promoting polycentrism and improving the efficiency of areas with dispersed settlement, as well as promoting cooperation between local-authority areas.

An example of successful RTI in Mazowieckie Voivodeship is a bundled investment entitled 'Establishment of Integrated Multifunction Passenger Exchange Node in Siedlce. Expansion and modernization of the associated communication system of the city and the subregion of Siedlce'. The bundle consists of the following initiatives:

1. expansion of communication infrastructure in the vicinity of the existing railway station in Siedlce,
2. construction of a bus interchange centre on the E 20 railway line located in the TEN-T, linking it to the north and south of the city and improving the public transport system in the area,
3. modernisation of the communication system in adjacent districts, as linked spatially to the TEN-T network,
4. establishment of a transfer centre in Sokołów Podlaski, which is linked spatially to the Siedlce Node.

The main project (1.) entails the construction of a tunnel and stage III of the inner-city ring road construction (connected directly to the railway line located in the TEN-T network and indirectly to National Road No. 2 located within the TEN-T network). It was possible to achieve improved accessibility of the city centre and the rail/road transfer node. Project

implementation will benefit from considerable supplementary payment from the EU. The very positive evaluation the project received was i.a. related to the effective cooperation achieved between the partner cities, as well as the way work linked up with planning and strategic documents. Thus, for example, Sokółów Podlaski, as one of the partner towns, will receive a 5.6M EUR (80%) supplementary payment, because a revitalization programme has been developed). Development of the overall RIT is to receive a supplementary payment of around 50M EUR. Construction is to be finished in the fourth quarter of 2018.

### **8.2.3 Managing the tourist product of the Augustowski Canal in Poland (peripheries and other specific regions)**

The Augustowski Canal is a historic 102 km-long facility, with several locks, connecting the Vistula River and Niemen basins, located in the north-eastern part of Poland and partly on the territory of Belarus. The Augustowski Canal is an outstanding example of Polish civil engineering from the early 19th century. In recent years it has gradually been renovated. It has been listed as an attraction along the European Route of Industrial Heritage.

The Canal runs through natural and culturally valuable areas, i.e. the Augustów Primeval Forest (one of the largest forest complexes in Poland) and wetland meadows and marshes of the Biebrza Basin. It is also one of the most important tourist attractions of Podlaskie Voivodeship, taking advantage of features valuable from the tourist and recreational points of view (in water sports, kayaking and sailing), and combining this with the development of local (peripheral) economies based on tourist services, yachting and fisheries (see: Podlaskie Voivodeship Development Strategy 2020). Nevertheless, intensive tourism lacking adequate quality infrastructure poses a serious threat to the natural environment in the region.

Management of this region's territory is based on the pursuit of integrated actions that serve the Augustowski Canal's development and create a common tourism product development strategy that raises attractiveness in terms of tourism and recreation in communities along the Canal, and serves in these areas' economic activation.

On the one hand, this is a strategy requiring long-term actions; while on the other it denotes a requirement for actions that take various aspects of local space into account. It was for this purpose that, prior to Poland's integration with the EU, PHARE pre-accession funds were used to improve the technical condition of the existing Canal infrastructure. Later, as EU funding was utilised, the main focus was on the construction or modernisation of facilities serving sport, tourism and leisure. Actions at the level of the whole country or the Eastern Poland macro-region, or else in the framework of cross-border cooperation, can be considered measures accompanying the regional development vision, e.g. taking heavy traffic transit (along the *Via Baltica* route) outside one of the region's main tourist centres - Augustów; and running the Eastern Poland Cycle Route along the Canal (*Green Velo*), with financing from the European Regional Development Fund, and with strengthened cross-

border infrastructure in the Canal area financed by the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine Cross Border Cooperation Programme.

Initially (under the 2007-2013 Financial Perspective), a lack of institutionalised cooperation between units of local and regional government did not prevent outlining of a particular strategic and programme framework for the development of the area around the Augustowski Canal. During this period, several documents of a supra-local character were developed, i.e. the Strategy for the integrated branded tourist product of the Augustowski Canal as an element of an international product, via the Strategy for the development of the tourist product known as the Water Route of King Stefan Batory and comprising the River Vistula and the Żerański Canal, the reservoir at Zegrze known as Zalew Zegrzyński, the Narew, the Biebrza, the Augustowski Canal and the River Niemen. At this stage, implementation was limited, with documents mostly serving to popularise issues relating to the region, while accentuating the need for a comprehensive approach to territorial management in the area.

During this period, support for the development of tourism involved use being made of natural and cultural heritage (raising the level of attractiveness to tourists and upgrading capacity as regards tourism), with this all being initiated on the basis of Priorities set out in the relevant Regional Operational Programme (ROP). Within the framework of the ROP's Priority Axis No. 3 'Tourism and Culture Development', priority for grants in a competitive procedure was given to investments in the areas most attractive in terms of tourism, including in the Canal area. In addition, a list of key projects planned for implementation in the non-competitive mode was defined; over 10% of EU funds in Priority Axis No. 3 of the ROP were allocated to projects located in the area of the Augustowski Canal (in the gminas of Augustów and Płaska). These investments addressed the tourism-related issues in a comprehensive manner, through the construction of walking-cycling-ski paths, the development of beaches and green areas, and the construction of a tourist and sports centre with a view to the quality of tourist services being raised and the tourist season extended.

Under the current Financial Perspective for 2014-2020, priority actions along the Augustowski Canal are focused on support for enterprises, and are being pursued consistently, with the support of EU funds and within the ROP framework. In a competitive procedure, priority for grants was assigned to investment in gminas (units of local government administration) that have *Natura 2000* areas. This also allows for investment in business related to tourism around the Augustowski Canal. Also developed is a concept for the revitalisation of the waterway between the Great Mazurian Lakes and the Augustowski Canal in Podlaskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie voivodeships.

Nevertheless, the most important change in territorial management of the Augustowski Canal area involves the way in which its management is organised. In 2016, a Polish-Belarusian working group on the development of the Augustowski Canal was formed. It consists of representatives of the Polish and Belarusian parties, including regional authorities, representatives of the State Forests and National Park, local authorities and the Regional



Water Management Board. The aim of the group is to develop tasks and cooperation, with a view to the potential of the Canal in terms of tourism and promotion being maximised. Consideration has been given to some of the postulates of the group, such as: a) a changed status of the Rudawka-Lesnaja river border crossing and the introduced option of a pedestrian and cycling crossing point; b) extension of the Green Velo cycle route to link the cycle paths along the entire Canal on both sides of the Polish-Belarusian border, and in Lithuania.

Management of the Augustowski Canal presents a spatial planning practice evolving over the years. The transformation of the strategic approach to the development of Augustowski Canal area may be regarded as a good example of bottom-up change in territorial management. There has been a switch in coordination and communication in the medium term, leading to the formalising of cooperation between authorities at the local and regional levels in Poland and Belarus. These activities have been dictated by increased investment activity reflecting the availability of EU funds and increased pressure to ensure consistency of action.

In conclusion, this is an example of consistent implementation of actions seeking to reconstruct a facility, as well as modernise areas adjacent to it. This is then a cohesive vision for use of the Augustowski Canal and revitalisation of areas adjacent thereto, in cooperation with units at local and provincial level, with bottom-up local initiatives, as well as inter-institutional cooperation between Poland and Belarus, including via the Niemen Euroregion Forum. A number of related activities have been pursued in several communities in Poland and Belarus, such as:

- modernisation of tourist infrastructure (the electric water ski lift, tourist paths and cycle paths),
- extension of the tourist season, i.a. via a broadening of the tourist offer (to include cross-country ski trails and the development of sanatorium facilities),
- strengthening of cross-border tourism (opening of the first river crossing point of Rudawka-Lesnaja).

Together, such activity has led to the creation of a tourist product of international importance. Furthermore, activity engaged in to date has given rise to further initiatives aimed at strengthening the tourist and economic functions of these areas, with account all the time taken of the protection of natural heritage.

#### **8.2.4 Ireland Eastern Midland Region Ferbane Community Plan – Offaly (peripheries and other specific regions)**

Ferbane in western County Offaly, Ireland, is a small rural town of under 1200 people on the periphery of the Eastern Midland Region included within the category of 'declining rural area'. It displays similar characteristics to other small peripheral rural towns (of less than 1500 people) in Europe, in terms of:

- loss of population
- the absence of a policy for service provision
- an ageing population

- economic disadvantages due to the loss of skilled young people to urban centres
- reduced demand for key services like schools, childcare and transport

### The Project

Between 1999 and 2001, the main employer of Ferbane, the Turf Board (*Bord na Mona*) began the process of terminating production of peat. The Electricity Supply Board had decommissioned its peat-fired power station to facilitate change to renewable energy. This had a significant impact on the town as the Turf Board had been a core part of the employment structure since 1946, and Ferbane was at risk of decline and service closure. As part of the process, the West Offaly Fund was established by the Electricity Supply Board to facilitate and support community and economic development in the area. Funding through the LEADER programme set the scene for a Local Action Group (LAG)<sup>1</sup> called the West Offaly Partnership, and a community development plan entitled the 'Ferbane Development Plan 2001' was facilitated by a very experienced planner<sup>2</sup>.

The Ferbane Community Plan was devised in 2001, at the time of the *Agenda 2000* and CAP II<sup>3</sup> reforms. An EU Rural Development Monitoring Data Report 2001-2003 mentions that CAP EAGGF<sup>4</sup> funds were mainly spent on 4 areas linked to agriculture, such as agri-environment, less-favoured areas, afforestation, and early retirement for farmers, which resulted in their significance in National Plans. The National Development Plan 2000-2006 (directed by CP) was then elaborated with a view to EU funding being drawn down for what was an Objective 1<sup>5</sup> region and a Cohesion state.

Included here were measures focused on rural development, such as LEADER+, the Western Development Fund and a White Paper (of 1996-1999) entitled 'A Strategy for Rural Development in Ireland'. The White Paper set up a framework to foster social and economic development, that would address issues of 'rural population decline ... and increasing national dependence on Dublin for employment and wealth creation'. It also highlighted terms such as 'an inclusive approach' and 'partnership with the rural community'. In Ireland, rural development policy is often coupled with agricultural policy, and the LEADER Programme was successful in effecting delineation of the two.

### LEADER

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<sup>1</sup> An 'LAG is a mix of public and private partners collaborating over a plan to develop a project in a rural area on a local-community scale (population of less than 100,000)

<sup>2</sup> The planner was funded separately, as LEADER does not provide funding for facilitation

<sup>3</sup> Common Agriculture Policy II

<sup>4</sup> The European Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) was a fund within the overall European Union budget for financing the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), before it was replaced by the EAGF & EAFRD in 2007 - OECD

<sup>5</sup> Objective 1 for NUTS 2 regions whose per capita GDP is lower than 75% of EU average which included the whole of Ireland (1994-99) –EC1996

At the time, the National Development Plan (2000-2006) referred to a need for sustainable rural communities to be promoted. However, in practice, there were missing links between real community needs, the economic situation and planning legislation. These gaps were filled by the LEADER delivery mechanism, a tripartite partnership between the voluntary, state and private sectors involved in the delivery of programmes, in which the 'lead role in convening the local partnership was played by civil society'. With LEADER, civil society was able to 'fund local service provision, animate community organisations, do training, capacity building and establish community networks. It was considered an innovation as it provided a mechanism to cover, form and support both soft and hard infrastructure. That sort of integration was fairly new'.

### Centralised system

Ireland has a centralised system reflecting the experience that 'trying to get central government to engage at local level was almost impossible. Drivers of activity at that level were always the local bodies such as the Educational Training Board, local authority and LEADER.' On paper the spatial planning system appears to be a nested system but in peripheral areas, in practice, 'the only decisions made at local level are decisions regarding how the nationally decided policies and systems and programmes will be applied'.

Key processes in the participation and level of impact – tangible and intangible

In the making of the Fербane Community Plan, there was 'no real involvement between different levels of government other than local government'. There was strong collaboration within the Local Action Group, i.e. between the officials and elected members of the Local Authority, community groups and the ESB.

Key aspects to the participation process that encouraged the investment of the community are detailed below.

- Individual invitations were sent to each household, with a request that they should send at least one representative. The planners were told to expect 20-30 people, while 100 people actually made an appearance.
- The community drew up the questionnaire survey, delivered it to households in their areas and collected it back. Response rates were upwards of 90% because it was 'people asking themselves'.
- The community was challenged to work within the public policy framework.
- Focus groups set up to decide actions that the community could take by itself, as well as what it would need others to do.
- Other parties were included, with The Turf Board, the Electricity Supply Board, elected members and local authority officials all forming part of the steering group.

### Challenges in the system

There are two challenges in the planning system:

- the lack of an effective process for the creation of shared visions

- linkage between the making of a community plan and the adoption of that into the statutory process.

Linkage between decisionmaking and decision taking is weak. While there many resources are poured into the making of a community plan, very little of the submission is taken on board. Furthermore, there is very little communication surrounding the submission. Reports on submissions tend to be generalised.

Although the planning system introduced a non-statutory pre-consultation phase called 'issues papers' (to provide an opportunity for people to communicate their issues), 'many communities do not have the capacity to gather their ideas collectively and make a planning submission'. Therefore the process of making a community plan helps people articulate their issues so they are ready to respond when there is a request for issues papers.

#### Participation process

The Ferbane process was different because of the way engagement took place. It took a year and a half. Groups that had been diametrically opposed developed relationships and found themselves working with people whom they had deemed impossible to cooperate with. As senior officials of the local authority and elected members formed part of the steering group of the LAG, it became a mechanism for them to engage with community and business organisations. 'You need both sides of the hook [...] if the communities are well developed and really doing their stuff, the other side of the system needs to be engaged. Otherwise it's a waste of time.'

#### Level of impact

The process of bringing the community together to create a plan over a year and a half became more important than the outcome, as the dynamic created a space for things to happen. The participation process produced a vision of a community that is working together – that has managed to come together and have some agreed views and perspectives and a vision for the future. This of course encourages potential investors and people in general.

Developments in the town have included:

- the enterprise centre
- a child care facility
- a Community Centre
- a new community school amalgamating several existing schools
- a bus service to the swimming pool 13 miles away

#### The changing landscape of LEADER in Ireland - New Planning Structures

The Local Government Act 2014 materialised with a proposal for new structures within the political and planning system. Its premise was that alignment was a good thing, and that local development should fit with local government rather than the other way around. This diminished the innovation of LEADER in Ireland; the leadership role played by civil society (in LEADER) has been replaced by local government.

### New Challenges for LEADER companies

There are new challenges to LEADER with the restructuring of the planning system.

The first is that the community projects have to suit the call for proposal. If a community project is about building a community centre and the specific call for proposal is on tourism then they have to wait until the next cycle; which could be two years.

Second is the way in which administration and auditing have become so procedural and bureaucratic that development workers are now more like administrators. Minor departures from procedures are scrutinised.

Third, the LEADER budget was halved, as a share has been allocated to the farming community, given the existence of tension between the two. However, to remain innovative, LEADER companies should have a degree of autonomy, with less control imposed on them.

### Long-term impacts of LEADER on territory and institutions in peripheral development

The main function of LEADER has been in the facilitation of community-based planning and development with a 'place-based' approach. Various ways of supporting rural and peripheral communities have helped with the maintenance of viable populations in areas that would otherwise not have had them. Lynch made the following points as regards effectiveness in supporting local communities:

- Forty years ago, communities used to come in to the local authority and they used to say 'We have this problem - how are you going to solve it?' Now it's much more 'We have this problem, how can you help us solve it?' LEADER played a big part in the capacity building.
- A significant impact on tourism infrastructure and the craft food industry was exerted. Furthermore, many community facilities would not exist without the LEADER support.
- LEADER has affected the way the agricultural community now thinks about its business opportunities with farm diversification. However, the percentage of people who envisage economic activity outside agriculture remains small.
- There is knowledge and awareness that sustainable rural development needs to be more spatial in concept, responding to local needs in relation to the global context, rather than relying on one sector - as was the case with the peat-fired power station.

### Good practice

The LEADER programmes have facilitated rural communities' building of capacity, adoption of resilient place-based approaches, encouragement of tourism and craft food industries and broadened concept of rural development. To keep this momentum, voluntary and community groups need resources in terms of finance and expertise, so that capacity can go on being built, and economic renewal proceeded with. The case study also reveals the importance of a sensitive expert outsider in catalysing a community's vision and shaping that into a strategy that continues to belong to that community.

### 8.2.5 Intelligent Territorial Monitoring in Navarre (cross-border regions)

The **Territorial Monitoring System of Navarre** is an example of a good practice as it links objectives for territorial development with concrete proposals on sectoral and territorial policy, taking into account the relationship with ongoing projects pursued by the Government of Navarre. The system of annual reports and evaluations tries to answer questions as to how sectoral policies (including EU CP) are to be implemented, with account taken of territorial impacts and the objectives of territorial cohesion.

In 2005, the Territorial Strategy for Navarre 2025 (TSN – *Estrategia Territorial de Navarra*)<sup>6</sup> was presented officially to show the development model for Navarre through to 2030, with account taken of the region's wider geographical context, including the cross-border situation. The TSN has the ultimate objective of promoting the sustainable and territorially balanced development of the Region of Navarre. In this sense, it includes a set of measures intended to serve as a guide to the actions of private agents and public bodies in Navarre, in the context of a long-term (25-year) vision, with wider intersectoral coordination sought from the point of territorial coherence of impacts. The TSN serves as a reference framework and guiding instrument for the elaboration of Territorial Planning Plans. It represents Spain's first application of a non-normative planning instrument at regional level (it is not a law, but an agreement between Parliament and the Economic and Social Council of Navarre).

To achieve the desired territorial model, the TSN proposes three major strategies: 1. to develop a territory that is cohesive and competitive at European level; 2. To ensure that that territory is well connected through different communication systems; and 3. to achieve a high level of cultural and natural quality for the whole territory of Navarre. In line with European Strategies, namely *Europe 2020* and the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020, the Navarre Strategy establishes three major socioeconomic development objectives, i.e. 'social cohesion', 'sustainability' and 'competitiveness'; as well as three territorial objectives, i.e. 'accessibility', 'polycentric and balanced development' and 'efficient management of cultural and natural heritage'.

Following approval, a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system was set up for the Territorial Strategy of Navarre. Within this system, the 'Social Council of Territorial Policy' engages in the annual monitoring of the TSN, using indicators and data from the *Observatorio Territorial de Navarra*<sup>7</sup>. The annual monitoring reports aim to evaluate the region's territorial development in the six dimensions proposed by the TSN, i.e. competitiveness, social cohesion, environmental conservation, polycentrism, accessibility and natural and cultural heritage; as well as the degree of implementation of strategic options and of the relevant model of territorial development.

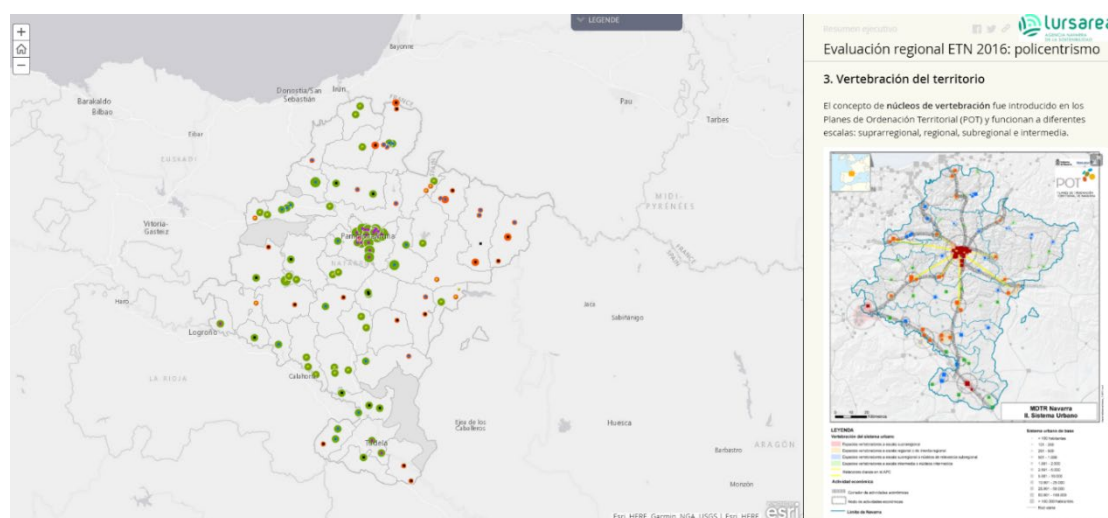
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<sup>6</sup> See the Territorial Strategy of Navarre at [http://www.navarra.es/home\\_es/](http://www.navarra.es/home_es/)

<sup>7</sup> See: <http://nasuvinsa.es/es/presentacion-del-otn>

Annual monitoring is carried out by the aforementioned Territorial Observatory of Navarre, located at LURSAREA<sup>8</sup> within NASUVINSA<sup>9</sup>, for the ‘Social Council of Territorial Policy’ and with the guidance and collaboration of the Department of Rural Development, Environment and Local Administration of the Government of Navarre. In the analysis of maps and data, conclusion-drawing and the proposing of policies other departments of the Regional Government have participated, i.e. the Vice Presidencies for Economic Development, and for Social Rights, Education and Health. Other bodies promoting local and rural development have also been involved.

Figure 8.1. Web Application of the 2016 Annual Report from the Territorial Observatory of Navarre



Source: <http://nasuvinsa.maps.arcgis.com/>

Annual monitoring of the TSN entails review of 29 indicators from the Indicator System for Territorial Development of Navarre (SIOTN)<sup>10</sup>, as followed by comparison with EU and Spanish average values, with averages from 15 European reference regions<sup>11</sup>, and with the situation in previous years. Each indicator is expressed on maps, by geographical sub-areas. This allows for analysis and visualisation of differences between territories, and for the evolution of territorial cohesion. The whole monitoring process reflects comprehensive and intelligent territorial evaluation. The socio-economic and territorial processes are analysed

<sup>8</sup> Navarre Agency for Sustainability

<sup>9</sup> Navarre de Suelo y Vivienda, or NASUVINSA, is a public company of the Government of Navarre in charge of housing and industrial land management.

<sup>10</sup> The SIOTN is structured in four main areas: Natural and cultural heritage, Urban system, Communications, transport and infrastructure and Coordination. Each of these axes corresponds to the chapters of the 5 Territorial Plans that cover Navarre. The areas mentioned are divided into sub-themes, and reflected in approximately 130 indicators.

<sup>11</sup> Comparison with 15 EU regions of similar socio-economic profile, in line with the analysis of the Smart Specialisation Strategy of Navarre (RIS3). The regions are: AT33 Tirol, ITH2 Trent, AT21 Kärnten, FR63 Limousin, NL1 Northern Netherlands, DE5 Bremen, AT34 Vorarlberg, NL3 Western Netherlands, BE3 Wallonia, SK01 Bratislava, ITH5 Emilia Romagna, FR43 France Comté, ES21 Basque Country, ES24 Aragon and UKN Northern Ireland.

thoroughly and evaluated in terms of: a) the six guiding principles for territorial development as proposed by the TSN, b) the diverse situation and needs in the main five territories in Navarre<sup>12</sup>, and c) the detailed relationship with 24 sectoral policies in Navarre<sup>13</sup>. This facilitates an effective 'territorial evaluation' and the definition of recommendations concerning sectoral policies, current policy strategies and programmes, as well as new projects.

Territorial monitoring thus supports implementation of sectoral policies, and hence ESIF Operational Programmes in Navarre, i.e. the ERDF Programme, ESF Programme and EAFRD Programme. An interesting cross-fertilisation takes place between territorial planning and sectoral policies in Navarre. As a concrete example, some elements of the territorial monitoring are used within the Monitoring system of the RIS 3 Smart Specialisation Strategy of Navarre, which defines the priorities for Research and Innovation and is a compulsory instrument for using ERDF funds on Research and Innovation. The RIS 3 strategy uses some of the Territorial Monitoring indicators to show progress with its 'territorial deployment'.

The Territorial Monitoring System of Navarre provides for the derivation of differentiated conclusions for the different territories with regard to rural development, transport policy or industrial policy. It also allows considerations regarding specific cross-border or macro-regional issues to be brought into the analysis and, therefore, the definition of sectoral policies. As an example, Navarre participated in an Interreg Atlantic Area project<sup>14</sup> from 2012 to 2014, with a view to an Atlantic Freight Corridor being promoted and developed through the creation of a transnational network of public administrations and rail, logistics and port operators, both public and private. The Territorial Observatory of Navarre took the results of this project into consideration, drawing up a comprehensive report on the implications for Navarre's territorial and sectoral planning<sup>15</sup>.

Further links with EU CP are achieved through the regular participation of the Territorial Observatory in EU projects (e.g. Interreg, LIFE, ESPON, etc.), in order for experiences to be exchanged and relevant knowledge generated in new and emerging areas like transport networks, services of general interest, enterprise zones, etc.

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<sup>12</sup> For further territorial planning, Navarre has defined 5 Territorial Plans for larger geographical areas identified within it, i.e. POT 1: Pyrenees, POT 2: Atlantic Navarre, POT 3: Central Area, POT 4: Medium Zones, POT 5: Axis of the Ebro.

<sup>13</sup> Water, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Demography, Social Rights, Rural Development, Retail, Social Economy, Industrial Development, Tourism, Education, Employment, Energy, RTDI, Gender equality, Inner-urban public transport, Railways and Air Transport, Highways, Public Sector Modernisation, Spatial and Land Planning, Waste, Social Services, Telecommunications/IT and Housing.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.atlanticrailcorridor.com/es/>

<sup>15</sup> Observatorio Territorial de Navarra 2016



### **8.2.6 Cross-border regions in Hungary's Győr-Moson-Sopron counties**

It is evident then that Bratislava has a specific position in the border region, and a unique spatial and structural situation. Its geographical attributes predestine the city to expand its urban area beyond the border, while economic growth also requires new territory.

The direction of outmigration and maximum distance of location from the city are influenced by transport conditions and the geographical environment. State borders pose a hindrance to the city from the west and south, while to the north and northeast there are hills whose beauty and pleasant residential conditions denote good (but expensive) dwelling conditions. Good transport conditions to the north and northwest are in turn assured by motorways. East of the city there is an area of plain land that favours spatial expansion, albeit with capacities as regards transport infrastructure that remain limited in this direction. The primary direction of migration is thus to the northwest. The motorway offers good accessibility to Brno and Senec (Trnava). However, beyond these areas with good transport connections in the country, there was also a steady process of discovery of areas located beyond the border. In fact, neighbouring Austrian and Hungarian villages are much closer to the inner city than the majority of the settlements in the Bratislava agglomeration, and the road infrastructure (especially to Hungary) is in good condition.

The phenomenon of residential mobility, and of suburbanisation on the Hungarian side gathered pace after 2007, and first concerned two villages along the border: Rajka (which is practically adjacent to the City of Bratislava) and Dunakiliti, which is separated from the administrative area of the Slovak capital by the Danube River. These are still the villages mostly involved in the suburbanisation process, and a situation has already arisen in which Slovak citizens account for approximately 50% of the inhabitants of Rajka (which has 2495 inhabitants officially and in fact an estimated 5000). Following the arrival of the first migrants, the increased real-estate prices led to the appearance of Slovak home owners in settlements of the second and third row back from the border (like Bezenye, Feketeerdő, Dunasziget, Mosonmagyaróvár and other settlements in their vicinity). Mosonmagyaróvár is the central town of the area, in which the proportion of incoming Slovaks is low, even though the largest number of homes owned by Slovak citizens can actually be found there.

It is important to note here that exact information on numbers of immigrants is lacking, as many do not register officially in their new places of residence (a similar phenomenon is in fact to be observed on the Slovakian side as well). Under Hungarian law, a foreign citizen only enjoys the status of permanent resident in a settlement after living there for five years. Citizens of an EU Member State can buy real estate in Hungary freely, but are under a reporting obligation as regards real estate acquired. Taking all these facts into consideration, the number of Slovak citizens who have settled in Hungary, but still in the hinterland of Bratislava, is an estimated 5000-8000.

The number of people residing on the Hungarian side is expected to increase, as municipalities react to demand by designating new residential areas in the settlements.

Constructions has already in fact begun. Also, housing construction on business land has been engaged in, with semi-detached houses consisting of several homes already built. The customers and clients are almost exclusively Slovak citizens.

Our surveys show that approximately 80% of the new settlers are Slovaks, although some half of all respondents speak or understand Hungarian at some level from native language to simple understanding. This significant population commutes to its place of work on a daily basis, just like any other agglomeration residents, albeit with a state border crossed in the process, not merely some local administrative boundary.

Conditions of road transport are good, as both a motorway and public roads connect the two sides. There is also a railway line that has not been used for passenger traffic for a long time. Presuming that suburbanisation is likely to continue, the Regional Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences organised first a focus group and then a workshop, in 2009, with companies running public transport also participating. Invitations have been accepted by DBP (the Slovak regional and Bratislava local bus service), representatives of the Austria-Hungarian railway company GYSEV, and representatives of line ministries and the local government of the capital of Bratislava. However, as Hungarian State Railways were considering the closedown of the line referred to above, they proved not to be interested in the development. The key step has been taken by the City of Bratislava (Magistrát hlavného mesta SR Bratislavy) and the Municipality of Rajka. Between 2009 and 2010 a cross-border cooperation project was developed with the lead partnership of the City of Bratislava, the purpose being to set up bus line no. 801 to link the village of Rajka and Bratislava city. DPB had some relevant experience, as it had previously launched a local cross-border bus line to the Austrian locality of Hainburg, which is a target area for suburban residents in Austria. In line with the project description, objectives were: to address poor transport facilities in cross-border regions by establishing a new international bus line between Bratislava and Rajka.; as well as to improve the accessibility of the region to inhabitants of Bratislava, Rusovce, Jarovce, Čunovo and Rajka.

The project strengthened cross-border relations between the Slovak Republic and Hungary, allowing citizens living in the border area to travel to work comfortably, to travel to enjoy cultural attractions, and also to make use of services offered in the City of Bratislava. The project helped to improve the living conditions of the citizens in border areas of Bratislava Region and Győr-Moson-Sopron County. The total budget for the project amounted to 391,024 EUR.

The newly established scheduled bus provides:

- a connection between the municipality of Rajka and the city of Bratislava, via their settlements;
- a connection between the municipality of Rajka and the centre of Bratislava, particularly the new National Theatre and that quarter of the city;

- a connection via a new route between the villages of Čunovo, Rusovce and Jarovce, and the centre of the city.

The bus has several stops inside Rajka, providing boarding options in different parts of the settled area. The service permits us within the country, as well on the Slovakian side. While the line's terminus was previously at the National Theatre, it now only goes as far as Rusovce railway station. While this is in some sense a cutting of the line, it has in fact increased its efficiency, since a frequency of operation of every hour has been increased to every half hour during peak periods. Furthermore, Rusovce station does have several transfer options to offer.

The bus line is well used, ensuring that it does not differ from other suburban bus lines from the sustainability point of view. Here it is important to point out that the new service targeted an existing market demand as suburban commuting is a key issue in all metropolitan areas, generating huge demand in one direction. For this reason too, the bus line is regarded as relatively sustainable in financial terms. The delineation of the route, and later its modification, was based on assessments made by the company's expert staff. Furthermore, the Slovak company was able to come to an agreement with the Hungarian public transport company holding the concession on the Hungarian side, where both public service and the use of bus stops was concerned.

### **8.2.7 Dublin Airport Terminal 2 Development in Ireland Eastern Midland Region (transport infrastructure and accessibility)**

The development of Ireland's second terminal project (T2) in 2010, aimed to enhance the infrastructural capacity and consolidate the airport's international gateway status within the context of transport agencies, airlines, third parties and environmental policies. It was established under the National Development Plan (NDP) 2007-2013 and the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020.

Spatial planning in Ireland supports the implementation of Operational Programmes (OPs), and regional and sub-regional strategies provide the framework for their delivery, and support individual projects funded by OPs. Ireland also has three regional assemblies. This good practice case study is located in the Eastern Midland Regional Authority (EMRA), in the Greater Dublin Area. Local level 1 governance of planning in this region is managed by the Fingal Local Authority, the most northerly of Dublin's four local authorities.

#### The spatial planning and governance context

The NDP pointed to the need for investment in Ireland's three State airports (Dublin, Cork and Shannon). To this end, national funding was allocated under the NDP to upgrade road transport networks under Transport 21 (the M50, M1 and M3 roads), with other investments (i.e. Metros North and West and national and non-national roads) also acting in support of the airport's expansion. The decision to approve the expansion also had regard to Regional

Planning Guidelines (RPGs, 2004-2006), the strategic transport policy for Dublin and the Fingal Local Authority (Local Level 1) Development Plan 2005-2011, and previous plans which had as their objective to provide for east-west expansion and the Local Airport Local Area Plan. Fingal CDP made provision for the airport expansion in line with the RPGs, outlined a comprehensive roads programme serving the airport, and set aside lands specifically for the development of Metro North, the then planned (not yet delivered) first Irish 'underground' rail line.

#### National policy context absent

Irish aviation policy has been described by the KI as somewhat 'protracted', given that there was no overarching policy prior to 2015. Spatial planning policy documents did recognise the importance of the airport but only 'low level policy' was available in the form of Local Area Plans and Development Plans at local level 1, to underpin its development. This meant that the consultation with key stakeholders in connection with the proposed expansion was never clear cut. A new national aviation policy was put in place in 2015 and is considered by the KI to be critical to the development of T2, as it provides an overarching aviation policy or 'superstructure around aviation' that hitherto was absent from Ireland.

#### Stakeholder consultation and influence on project delivery

Ireland's enabling legislation as regards planning, the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (Irish Statute Book No. 30, of 2000) provides a number of opportunities for consultations with stakeholders and more general public participation in line with the Aarhus Convention on the right to public participation in planning, and the Directive on Public Participation (2003/25/EC). Pre-planning consultation with stakeholders and with local government is afforded on proposed developments under the aforesaid Planning and Development Act. Public participation in planning is facilitated by submissions on planning applications made prior to the receipt of development consent, with both first and third party appeals against planning decisions made by Local Authorities allowed. However, the KI (Key Informant) was of the view that participation can be problematical in some instances:

*'Aarhus (Convention and Directive on the right to public participation in environmental decision making) – in Ireland you don't need any locus standi to make a submission – it's not good. Public participation is ok when you are dealing with umbrella (or representative) groups but when you are dealing with individuals it's hard – it can be challenging when you put forward proposals (...to address concerns/issues which may be unique to individuals). In terms of understanding stakeholder requirements it's easier to respond to specific concerns of umbrella/representative groups.'*

The KI further explained that the Irish planning process can be seen by applicants as cumbersome, and is sometimes mired in delays, due the high level of participation and consultation provided for.

(As part of standard pre-planning process) *'The proponents of applications must consult with national bodies, transport bodies (e.g. National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure for Ireland) and sit down with them (to discuss the project), not necessarily at speed. The intent is good but they (proponents) could be caught by different perspectives, it just takes time e.g. surface access (i.e. transport linkages), getting approval or alignment is a lengthy process'*

In the case of T2, public transport access was a key issue that the Dublin Airport Authority had to address with relevant stakeholders during the planning consent process. The Inspector's report on the planning application (*An Bord Pleanála*, 2006/PL06F.220670) reviewed the adequacy of the Environmental Impact Assessment in this regard. The final preferred site was selected on the basis of road access and proximity to the (then) proposed underground, a Ground Transportation Centre, bus terminus and car parking. The transport elements of the Environmental Impact Assessment were considered adequate and robust by the Inspector, however a number of stakeholders including Ryanair, *An Taisce* - The National Trust for Ireland, and local residents, raised concerns about transport and traffic generation issues arising from increased passenger numbers, as well as concerns about conflict with national and international commitments to reduce GHG emissions. The Key Informant (KI) referred to the need for pre-planning consultations with transport stakeholders, to discuss how surface access would be facilitated, and to discuss modal split options. Transport issues proved to have a key influence on the planning case as conditions were attached to final consent approval, placing a cap on passenger numbers to 35 mppa (million passengers per annum).

Stakeholder consultation can therefore lead to significant alterations in outcomes for project delivery, and can create time delays which can be costly for proponents. The KI referred to the introduction of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act (SID) 2006 (No. 27 of 2006) as a positive measure to address the delays associated with planning in Ireland. Section 37(a) 2 of the SID Act requires that developments in the categories listed in the Seventh Schedule of the Act that are deemed (a) 'strategic' in nature (i.e. of economic or social importance to the country or region); (b) capable of contributing to national spatial and/or regional planning objectives or (c) capable of having a significant effect on the area of one or more planning authority, are sent directly to the Irish Planning (Appeals) Board, *An Bord Pleanála*, for planning approval, rather than to the Local Authority. In effect the process limits the possibility of third-party appeals, but maintains a right to pre-planning consultation and public submissions on SID applications. In the case of T2 the application was deemed to be a SID project. Prior to the application, Dublin Airport Authority (DAA) carried out pre-planning consultations with various stakeholders including Fingal Local Authority (local level 1) and the Department of Transport (national level) and the Irish Rail Procurement Agency (RPA)/Transport Infrastructure for Ireland (TII) (national level), to discuss issues around modal split and growth in passenger numbers. In terms of cooperation between agents the KI stated:

*'There is a general positive approach, but you have to go to the bodies individually, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on environmental monitoring and the National Transport Authority (NTA) and National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS). The proponent must go to each department individually.'*

The KI further indicated that the process of consultation between agents and stakeholders was not difficult per se; rather she indicated that it may be a lack of resources at the root of the problem:

*'Don't think there is a difficulty (with the process of cooperation and consultation per se) but there is a significant time difference between how long it takes for each agent to make a decision (during pre-planning consultations with the various agents involved) – (it's a question of ) efficiency of resources (within the various agencies, which might be stretched). Dividing the project up into work streams (is good). There will always be stumbling blocks, once you get into planning (it's more efficient) but pre-planning consultation can take up to 2 years.'*

Although the KI referred to the benefits of the SID as providing a 'one-stop-shop for planning applications', it considered it not necessarily efficient in making its determinations, because all developments of a certain type have to be referred to *An Bord Pleanála* first, even if the applicant is of the view that the development does not come under the Act:

*'[the SID] has no trigger or no bar (that would suggest which type of applications might be deemed 'strategic' in nature by proponents). Applications [must] go through to An Bord Pleanála, even if there is a view by the applicant that the project is not of strategic importance.'*

In terms of models of good practice in Ireland the KI also indicated that aligning the national planning framework with the (proposed) National Investment Plan (NIP) and specific planning strategies would facilitate more joined-up planning, and ensure that projects could come to fruition more seamlessly. She believed that there was 'a lack of interaction with EU cohesion' for aviation, other than Euro-routes. While acknowledging some EU support, aviation did have the same focus as the marine sector.

*'Certainly Cohesion Funds have assisted Ireland over the last 20 years, the airport is independent, (but) the EIB had provided loans to T2. However there is nothing in place for aviation similar to Marine Spatial Planning, at EU level.'*

### **8.2.8 Good practices to overcome problems of natural and cultural heritage in Östergötland region**

The archipelago in Östergötland has uniquely valuable natural and cultural features. It is designated in its entirety as an Area of National Interest, because of its natural and cultural environment, in line with the Swedish Environmental Code that requires special consideration to be given to the interests of tourism and outdoor recreation. It is a rural and peripheral area in which the establishment of more permanent jobs proves difficult. There are a thus number

of challenges to regional development related to the simultaneous protection and development of the area's natural and cultural heritage. These include tensions between agricultural and maritime interests, the development of tourism and environmental protection, but are also related to depopulation and demographic issues, and support for the local economy. The regional authority of Östergötland Region is here an important coordinating actor for spatial planning and territorial governance, since it is responsible for regional development issues even if it does not have any legal mandate vis-à-vis spatial planning.

The way in which the Östergötland Region is working strategically to coordinate different policy fields with a view to these issues being addressed can be regarded as good practice involving the cross-fertilising of EU policies with territorial governance and spatial planning, as well as the solving of problems as regards thematic issues. On the one hand, EU policies are the subject of a direct mention as a basis for regional policies, and are discernible indirectly in new (non-statutory) spatial planning instruments. On the other hand, EU programmes (most evidently Interreg) and funding are used to implement, facilitate and support different projects aiming to overcome challenges related to, for example, the preservation of natural and cultural heritage and the development of new innovations and business opportunities (e.g. those related to blue growth). Good practice here is thus a combination of the utilisation of different regional and spatial planning instruments to coordinate different policy fields (and implicitly EU policies), and the use of EU programmes and funding for the in-practice exploration of innovative ways of addressing specific problems of spatial planning and territorial governance relating to EU CP.

The EU's agenda for growth and jobs has been an important background document for the Regional Development Programme (Regional utvecklingsprogrammet RUP) in Östergötland. Both the EU 2020 Strategy and Sweden's National Reform Programme 2011 are mentioned explicitly in the development programme. All regions in Sweden are obliged to develop regional development programmes, which should constitute comprehensive strategies for regional development, and as such form a basis for regional structural funds programmes, territorial programmes, regional growth programmes, etc.

Östergötland Region has also developed a non-statutory regional spatial strategy to translate the regional development strategies into spatial regional planning. An objective with the regional spatial strategy (Strukturbild) is to coordinate the regional development programme (RUP) with the regional transport plans (Länstransportplanen and Trafikförsörjningsprogrammet) and spatial planning in the municipalities. The regional spatial strategy is not a statutory planning instrument, but it does coordinate different policy fields, and is an important policy tool highlighting spatial priorities, e.g. important nodes and transport corridors.

Östergötland Region has also developed a specific targeted programme for rural development (Insatsprogram för landsbygd 2014-2010). It is highlighted that EU programmes and Structural Funds should be utilised in programme implementation. Sweden's national

Rural Development Programme and Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) is mentioned as particularly important. The Region has also been involved continually with different Interreg programmes, a fact that has had its direct impact on spatial development.

Furthermore, the Region has joined coastal municipalities and the adjacent region to develop a joint programme for the archipelago (Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030). The objective of the programme is to develop an archipelago that, through its unique natural, cultural and recreational values, is attractive to both residents and visitors, as well as to different types of businesses (i.e. both services, as well as agriculture).

During the 2007-2013 programming period, the region was the lead partner in the Central Baltic INTERREG IVA project called BACES, for 'Baltic Archipelago and Island Centres', which ran from May 2010 to April 2013.<sup>16</sup> The objective of the project was to accelerate regional economic growth through, and to improve pre-conditions for living, working and visiting in the archipelago and islands area, area with focus on accessibility, the economy and the environment, and it address issues of natural environment assets for sustainable tourism. One part of the project was the development of 'Skärgårdslinjen i Östergötland', a charter boat connection that has been highlighted by the national agency responsible for rural and regional development as a good example of how Structural Funds contribute to local and regional development in specific areas.

The Östergötland Region is lead partner in the EUSBSR flagship Interreg-project Baltic Blue Growth.<sup>17</sup> This is another example of how a project funded by the European Regional Development Fund is used to initiate, facilitate and spur local development and use resources (i.e. demonstrate how). Like many rural areas, this one finds it difficult to establish permanent jobs, while in the archipelago region, this proves even more difficult given stringent environmental policy in the area. The primary goal of the project is to demonstrate the potential for an industry with a positive impact on the environment, and the creation of jobs in the region. It is targeted towards the specific objective of blue growth within the priority area of natural resources.

The management and link-up of valuable ecological, landscape and cultural features in the archipelago regions is done through spatial planning and territorial governance practices utilising various statutory and non-statutory planning and governance instruments to translate EU policy to local conditions, while simultaneously deploying EU funding in support of projects that facilitate policy implementation. This is thus an example of how EU policy and funding seems to be influencing the territorial governance practices of a region, and how it influences both planning issues and project (islands, natural and cultural heritage), but also how it is

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<sup>16</sup> (see: <http://www.bacesmaps.eu/about-the-baces-project/>)

<sup>17</sup> (see <http://projects.interreg-baltic.eu/projects/baltic-blue-growth-11.html>)



related to and might influence or facilitate indirectly new modes of coordination or communication of practices between levels and/or between agencies at the same level.

## 9 Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions from the study are presented with reference to the selected thematic issues. Recommendations are shown more synthetically, with respect to the overall relationship between CP and spatial planning and territorial governance. The detailed reports from the five case study regions follow this summary report.

### 9.1. Conclusions

Polycentric development was recognised as one of the major policy aims in all of the case studies analysed. However, the settlement characteristics varied between regions. The issues identified were: a) suburbanisation is mostly an issue of significance in the larger urban areas (PL, SE, HU); b) difficulties with the achievement of balanced territorial development are experienced where the system for the control of land development malfunctions (especially in eastern European countries, where land-use regulation and development activities do not contribute to the achievement of the objective (PL, HU); c) challenges in less-urbanised areas include a lack of critical mass in urban size and population, dispersed settlement and poor accessibility (IR, SP-FR, PL).

In some countries, like Sweden, the EU policy related to polycentricity and suburbanisation issues was absent from planning documents, though the EU discourse was infused indirectly at the local and regional levels (e.g. with indirect support under European Security and Defence Policy). In the eastern European countries dependence on Structural Funds markedly influenced spatial planning systems and territorial governance. In the case of a strong actor in the region with high GDP per capita (such as Budapest or Warsaw), available EU subsidies for the whole region decreased, with the result being internal conflict and a willingness to disconnect from the agglomeration whose effect is to inflate income in the region as a whole. The positive impact of CP on more-balanced and compact development could be observed in support for land consolidation programs, infrastructural projects and educational and sports facilities, with increased settlement density encouraged in the vicinity of newly-built objects. On the other hand, the relative ease with which necessary EU funds could be acquired resulted in overestimated infrastructure investments (e.g. sewerage and transport infrastructure), increasing the area for building development, and finally causing dispersion of the built-up area.

Peripheries and other specific regions represent an issue of moderate/high importance in European countries, both among beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of Cohesion Fund. Development in peripheral areas is a common concern across the EU, as it means not only peripheral regions (from the national point of view), but also peripheries within regions (even in metropolitan areas like a capital-city region). Managing peripheries is an issue strongly interlinked with other thematic issues, especially transport infrastructure and accessibility, support for the local economy or natural and cultural heritage, as it covers several policy areas requiring general problems to be solved (with integrated development encouraged).

The basic challenges of peripheries (e.g. depopulation, economic weaknesses, public services availability) are distributed unevenly within regions, so territorial governance needs to take it into consideration and makes it a more complex issue. Territorial development and spatial planning need to strive for strengthened regional competitiveness, with development potential used and practices identified, with a view to overcoming issues in peripheral regions which might be difficult due to: a) the activation of local actors to participate in projects and develop strategic documents, b) compliance with requirements as regards the maintenance of areas of high natural value in a region, c) the overall costs of territorial governance (relatively high and burdensome for peripheral communes), d) the need to strike a balance between reduced demand for public services (schools, childcare and transport), the delivery of minimum essential public services and ensured accessibility of a region.

The relationship to EU CP, spatial planning and territorial governance in this thematic issue is discernible. The most crucial relationships concern human capital and means of management, including: a) the institutionalisation of communication between local actors (regular meetings held, project generation and implementation coordinated); b) increased cooperation between territorial units (horizontal), if still insufficient in some cases (though partly enforced by CP); c) improved strategic planning competences, mostly at regional, but also at local level, d) implementation of integrated development of cities and regions along with regional development issues (integration of regional development programmes in the regions comprehensive municipal plans). The Swedish case offers an example of CP and spatial planning/territorial governance cross-fertilisation, the project enhancing involvement in local management, and aiming to develop new methods by which public-private-people partnerships in brownfield development may gain support.

The extent and success of cross-border cooperation, including coordination of spatial planning, are often decided by regional geographical specificity (e.g. a location in mountainous areas or on border rivers), as well as settlement aspect (presence of a border in the vicinity of metropolitan areas, e.g. Vienna and Bratislava; isolated rural settlement, e.g., in mountainous areas, in the Pyrenees for example). In general terms, the problems identifiable in borderland areas reflect the facts that: a) borderland zones are often areas of high natural value, with this posing particular challenges to spatial planning required to both stimulate development and counter threats to natural heritage; b) spatial planning involves the development and extent of cross-border services of general interest; c) regulations at the national level exert an indirect influence on the effectiveness of cooperation undertaken in a spontaneous way (bottom-up) by local units or population groups.

Support provided by the EU structures represents a very important element stimulating cross-border cooperation (Euroregions, INTERREG projects) and establishing its spatial dimension. There is a danger that, without support provided under CP, there may be a breakdown of cooperation mechanisms developed down the years, with the result that extensive areas become re-peripheralised. Regional organisations dealing with cross-border cooperation have

an impact on the allocation of resources under the INTERREG project. In spite of this, cooperation remains predominantly sectoral in nature (also within the Schengen zone). The priority axes of INTERREG programmes concentrate primarily on the crucial sectoral issues with a clear-cut territorial dimension. Simultaneously, spatial planning itself fails to contribute to the creation of separate axes, with cross-border spatial coordination of sectoral policies thus by its very nature figuring outside the goals of CP. A discernible further problem is a lack of knowledge concerning the competence of local authorities and other units located on the other side of the border. Mutual knowledge of the institutional system existing on the other side of a border should constitute the basis for effective cross-border spatial planning. The other problem is a need for closer integration of strictly cross-border activities (supported by INTERREG programmes) as well as of internal measures (financed from resources stemming from other Operational Programmes). Other programmes frequently offer greater opportunities. At the same time, however, priorities axes (goals) are not always concurrent with cross-border projects pursued in the same area.

Support for local economies is an issue of moderate importance in European countries, as country experts assess. Simultaneously, it is a rather general theme that might incorporate a number of different policy areas. The several problems and challenges identified in the different countries relate to: a) separation/division of responsibility in terms of economic development and spatial planning; b) the multiplicity of strategies created for overlapping areas, with a view to EU funding being obtained (notwithstanding the way this may lead to distortion of the idea of strategic planning); c) unintended spatial consequences of intervention in local economies, especially if local land-use plans are lacking; and d) unpreparedness and inefficiency of spatial planning systems for intensive development in new sectors of the economy (e.g. wind energy).

The impact of CP on support for local economies is described mostly as moderate. However, there are differences between the CEECs (Central and Eastern European countries) and Western and Northern Europe. Member States introduce different planning instruments which facilitate support for local economies in areas with specific needs ('priority regions' in Hungary or 'Functional Regions' in Poland). The special development concepts and programmes elaborated for such areas serves as the basis for the pursuit of CP and raising of EU funds. There are several examples of revitalisation/regeneration processes in areas with specific needs being achieved on the basis of European co-funding. A Polish case study (the city of Łódź) offers a positive example of relations between CP, spatial planning and territorial governance. The possibility of EU funds being raised for revitalisation proved motivating for local authorities when it came to dealing with local spatial planning. The positive aspects of participation by non-governmental stakeholders were also mentioned in the Irish case (Dublin, regeneration of the Ballymun housing estate). However, Ballymun, whose regeneration was supported by CP, in fact offers a rather unsuccessful example of planning. Risks like the economic crash were not taken account of as that area's masterplan of regeneration was being developed.

In most countries, development of transport infrastructure (and accessibility improvement) is dependent on the spatial planning system. In the countries that are beneficiaries of CP, a large part of transport investments are conducted with the support of the European structural funds. CP overlaps with transport policy, while spatial planning has often proved unprepared for such a significant intensification of the investment process. Among analysed case studies, the impact of CP on the development of transport infrastructure was most distinct in Poland and Hungary, as well as in Ireland where the national and regional scales are considered. Lesser significance of the support from the European Union was only observed in Sweden. In all four countries, the role of CP has been decreasing, while transferring from the national and regional across to the local scale. In the CEECs the liquidation (in the 1990s) of certain planning services has been a factor constraining scheduled development of transport networks (under the slogan of breaking with the centrally planned economy). After 2004, these services had to be re-established. In a majority of the countries examined there is an issue with conferment of competences as regards the construction and maintenance of transport infrastructure.

In general, the impact of CP on the development of transport networks should be evaluated positively, on the macro-scale especially. Although funds were gained for the implementation of numerous projects, the inertia in terms of implementing systemic solutions has remained. CP promotes the development of large transnational projects, while regional- and local-level connections remain member-state priorities. The approach taken to CP in the case of transport investment in new accession countries often proved reactive. It was necessary to create new documents for the purposes of spending EU funds. These were in fact enacted, but were based on existing funding capability, rather than real, long-term spatial development needs. In Poland, special Acts on the roads and railways accelerated investment, while at the same time contributing to reduced significance of the local plan as the final courses of new routes are determined. Such a pattern results in conflicts, mainly socially based. On the other hand, as the most significant positive impact of CP on the process of spatial planning in the new accession countries, experts point to the development of procedures as regards both consultation and mediation. A significant constraint on the implementation of transport projects (particularly in public transport) has related to difficulties with cooperation between municipalities of a metropolitan area, or even between the FUAs around medium-sized cities. Certainly, a desirable solution enforcing such cooperation has been the Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) system applied in the current programming period. In Poland some regional authorities have allocated additional funds for Regional Territorial Investment (RTI) under the Regional Operational Programme. In the EU-15, the issue of transport and accessibility has as its most evident relationship between EU policy and spatial planning and territorial governance is the fact that actors can apply for EU co-funding within the TEN-T programme, or through other EU programmes, rather than by influencing spatial planning systems or territorial governance in general. These programmes and co-funding are useful, and facilitate the implementation of certain infrastructure projects. In this context, the Connecting Europe

Facility (CEF) mechanism emerged as particularly crucial. At the same time, these investments are implemented as part of local planning systems, which in some cases might exert a negative effect on flexibility of solutions on the local scale.

Generally, combining management over natural and cultural heritage poses certain difficulties, due to these two fields most often being separate in terms of policy and legislation. In essence, when it comes to subjective scope excluding issues relating to spatial planning, the legal regulations are divergent and usually dispersed. The role of spatial planning systems and territorial governance in management of natural and cultural heritage as such is of both a strategic and a regulatory nature. However, it is quite differentiated in relation to a given issue and policy pursued by a given state, region or local governance. In cross-border areas that are cut through by a state or regional border, the problems are sometimes concerned with diverse protection and development policies adopted for such a type of area, with this *inter alia* manifesting itself in a lack of well-coordinated policies and programmes of actions, including for example a lack of adequately compatible forms of protection and documents either side of a border. Two levels, i.e. regional and local, are indicated as most important factors to be considered when it comes to natural and cultural heritage issues in the process of territorial governance and spatial planning. Difficulties in regard to spatial planning at times concern problems associated with ensuring satisfactory access to areas with valuable natural and cultural heritage features (in peripherally located areas in particular), as well as development as broadly conceived. The majority of spatial conflicts are generated by transport investments that cut through valuable ecosystems and ecological corridors, as well as by the development of accommodation facilities and holiday/second homes in tourist areas (like coastal and lakeside zones, land adjacent to forest). A further problem is presented by the fragmentation of ecological corridors and the landscape, and generally by ever-increasing pressure on the environment.

In general terms, CP can be said to sustain activity that favours the protection of natural and cultural heritage, as well as combining these issues and making use of them for sustainable development and the stimulation of relevant activity. In principle, CP supports local development in areas characterised by high-value environmental, landscape and cultural heritage, including especially peripheral areas affected by depopulation processes. Analysis of the situation in Podlaskie region (Poland) and in Baranya county (Hungary) indicates that, when it comes to the protection of natural and cultural heritage, assistance measures within the framework of CP are often unsystemic in character, tending instead to be isolated and dispersed. They also lack spatial coordination. These problems are also true of agri-environmental programmes. Particularly important issues are associated with varying degrees of cohesion, primarily between Operational Programmes and instruments of spatial planning. For instance, in Poland, the recommendations for protection plans drawn up for *Natura 2000* areas are not always characterised by satisfactory integration with the policies of municipalities, and with local plans. A weakness is the so-called planning protection of highly valuable areas in respect of nature, culture and elements of the landscape.

Summing up, relationships between spatial planning, territorial governance and CP can be seen as strong and multidirectional. However, the situation in this respect differs between Central-Eastern and Western Europe. In the former case, projects are supported by Structural Funds that have a huge impact on spatial development, and at times also on the system of planning itself (special acts). Spatial transitions that take place thanks to the use of the aforesaid funds do not always correspond with the priorities set in the EU 2020 Territorial Agenda. The inflow of easy-accessible funds sometimes contributes to negative spatial phenomenon, such as suburbanisation. At the same time, planning systems in the countries in question are not fully prepared for such a marked intensification of investment projects. Problems lie in the institutional limitations in horizontal cooperation of regional or local authorities, as well as in inefficiency of local planning.

In EU-15 countries the impact of CP is more selective spatially. The importance is great when it comes to the activation of cross-border cooperation, as well as the completion of some of the missing infrastructural segments or elements of the TEN-T network.

In most cases, it was hardly possible to reveal good practices including direct cross-fertilisation of CP with spatial planning/territorial governance. Simultaneously, good practices were identified in connection with spatial planning, effective implementation of projects pursued under CP (e.g. the monitoring of territorial processes) being facilitated in this way. It is possible to define these as examples of good preparation of the planning system for external intervention. Other good practices reveal projects emerging as successful, the accomplishment of which would not be possible without a favourable institutional environment in terms of planning. The presented practices therefore offer additional proof of a close correlation between the successful pursuit of CP goals and systems and the practices of planning and territorial governance. To a limited degree, the existence of direct cross-fertilisation is confirmed.

## 9.2. Recommendations

**Place-based development and a functional approach.** EU policy has not fully contributed to a more balanced and place-based development since the allocation of EU funds has not been sensitive to inter-country and inter-regional differences. Moreover, the basis has mainly been in sectoral logic (though excessive decentralisation in the planning system, particularly in metropolitan areas with significant investment pressure, is also not recommended). As CP is pursued, more and more emphasis needs to be placed on the functional diversification of regions. CP should in particular promote territorial complexity and complementarity of interventions under different sectoral policies in the functional areas. Interventions should be treated as a spatial system. It is also recommended that EU funding be utilised to experiment on how local specificities might be utilised in support of territorial cohesion and structural change in a region or part thereof.

**Guidelines for rational allocation.** In countries with a malfunctioning spatial policy, there should be implementation strengthening of spatial policies and plans. Clear guidelines (strict regulation on land use) should be developed for the rational allocation of EU funds and the evaluation of real needs (land balance, forecasts, financial implications of urbanisation). Otherwise, implementation of CP might result in effects opposite to those intended, such as the hidden suburbanisation of inner peripheries.

**Support for co-operation.** There is a need for a mechanism encouraging/enforcing bottom-up cooperation and cooperation between neighbouring spatial units. Adoption of the thematic development programmes can be assessed as a good example for a bottom-up approach and the recognition of joint interests that generate joint actions. What is more, integrated regional investments have proved to be efficient tools at the local level, strengthening (forcing) cooperation between actors. Integration of investments at different levels (special support for co-operating units, further development of IDI and RTI instruments) ought to be a particularly significant criterion when it comes to the selection of future CP projects. CP should promote governance practices based on territorial cooperation and stakeholder networks. Also in border areas it is important that small scale and grassroots actors willing to cooperate be supported through (1) appropriate project-engineering structures, located as close as possible to need, which can orientate and support the 'would-be' project holder in their search for financial sources (at the sub-regional scale) and (2) micro-funding for small project to kick-start cooperation and enable experimentation/feasibility studies.

**Spatial and transport policy integration.** Spatial planning systems and territorial governance have direct and clear implications for the promotion of polycentric and balanced territorial development. However, other policy areas can also prove useful in influencing polycentric development and the management of urban change, for example via the planning of transport infrastructure, or the specific management of peripheries and other specific regions (inner-suburbanisation). Above all, it is integration of transport policy with spatial planning systems that needs to be strengthened. Transport policy must take into account a broader spectrum of objectives with a territorial dimension. It should not be based solely on the criteria of satisfying the demand arising out of the increased transport of people and goods. In the new accession countries, special solutions introduced alongside the 'investment boom' should be integrated gradually into the general planning system. It is further recommended that transport infrastructure be viewed as both a tool for spatial planning and a policy field capable of being integrated and coordinated – by way of spatial planning – with other policy fields, such as housing.

**Flexibility of infrastructure project support.** Access to CP support for major infrastructure projects in metropolises must be flexible. This applies both to the support criteria (cities with high nominal GDP per capita may not be able to handle large investments themselves, especially in public transport), as well as rigorous preferences for specific modes of transport



only (where intermodal solutions are often the only ones capable of increasing the system's efficiency).

**The CEF mechanism.** The introduction of the CEF mechanism can be assessed positively, to the extent that it is advisable for it to be continued with. At the same time, projects implemented as part of the TEN-T network should be assessed to a greater extent in terms of their integration with regional and local transport systems (for example with local spatial management (or physical development t) plans being assessed in terms of their ability to 'receive' a large investment).

**Integrated action for areas of natural and cultural heritage.** CP, spatial planning systems and territorial governance should all be characterised by a more coordinated, integrated and systemic approach. This will require the development of innovative management mechanisms and the use of all levels of spatial planning. Areas valuable from the point of view of natural or cultural heritage and, above all, combining these values could be the addressees of a specific part of the CP support dealing with 'natural and cultural RIT'. Given that support from EU funds in the field of cultural heritage is too often involved in dispersed or individual activities, it is necessary to focus on the systemic approach. Improving the efficiency of use of agri-environmental programmes in the protection of valuable ecosystems requires the development of systemic solutions and mechanisms to support the protection of entire ecosystems, not accidental fragments thereof. One of the possibilities is cooperation with the farmers' associations from a given area.

**Stakeholder involvement.** Involvement of citizens and stakeholders in the planning process can greatly support the management of conflicts between spatial development and the protection of natural, cultural and landscape heritage.

**An integrative approach for lagging and peripheral regions.** In the case of lagging regions it is possible to observe a strong need for a change of approach to a systemic one, including as regards territorial governance and CP interactions in opposition to non-coordinated actions and projects leading to dissipation. This reflects the strong dependence of development processes in these regions on investments financed from Structural Funds. Emphasising, preparing and implementing an integrated approach, starting from the national level down to the local, is thus particularly essential for the next programming periods, as it should be an effective tool that takes changing EU strategic priorities into account, as well as representing the long-term interests of the local community of peripheral regions and leading to long-term regional and spatial development.

**Simplification of procedures.** In peripheral areas it is important for instruments and procedures in spatial planning to be simplified, in order that there might be increased flexibility as development processes are stimulated.

**The LEADER programmes.** The LEADER programmes have facilitated rural communities as regards capacity-building, the adoption of resilient place-based approaches, the

encouragement of tourism and craft food industries and the broadening of the concept of rural development. To keep this momentum, voluntary and community groups need resources as regards finance and expertise, to keep building capacity and ensure economic renewal. The Ireland case study also showed the importance of a sensitive expert outsider to catalyse the community's vision and shape it into a strategy belonging to that community.

**A basis for cross-border planning.** It is important to use European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) and other cross-border entities as knowledge-pool and soft-cooperation facilitators. As they are dedicated to cross-border or transnational cooperation, cross-border entities can be identified by project holders as a legitimate contact organisation. The case study shows that formal cross-border entities, such as EGTC, can significantly enhance the fast, efficient and effective delivery of cross-border projects. Under CP, support ought to be forthcoming for those instruments and projects (as separate priority axes) that provide the basis for spatial planning in the cross-border dimension, including the creation of joint planning documents, systems of territorial monitoring (as for example in Navarra) and collection of data on spatial aspects by other entities (climate changes observatories).

**Special needs of some cross-border areas.** It is necessary to take into consideration changes in the functions of areas as a result of ongoing spatial processes in a neighbouring country (e.g. suburbanisation spreading beyond state boundaries). Cross-border areas of this type (e.g. the Vienna-Bratislava-Gyor triangle) may require greater and more diverse support than the current funds offered within the framework of INTERREG programmes. It is essential to ensure, not only better coordination, but also joint spatial planning. It is expedient for European and national authorities to strive for enhanced coordination of activities between INTERREG projects and other EU Operational Programmes. This is in particular true of measures pursued in areas adjacent to the external border of the European Union. Moreover, spatial planning in regions at the external border of EU require more attention, also taking into account the existing EU support tools (e.g. Partnership Instrument, European Neighbourhood Instrument, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance etc).

# COMPASS – Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe

## **Case Study Report: Spain France Cross-Border**

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## Abbreviations

CP	Cohesion Policy
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EC	European Commission
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
EGTC	European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
ESF	European Social Fund
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
EU	European Union
EU2020	EU Strategy Europe 2020
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
PCCO	Pyrenean Climate Change Observatory
TA2020	Territorial Agenda 2020
TG	Territorial Governance

# 1 Introduction

The border between France and Spain runs across the whole Pyrenean massif from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea. The cross-border space includes densely populated coastal areas, rural mountainous areas with low densities as well as surrounding large cities in the piedmont. Spatial planning issues in this context involve national authorities (France, Spain), regional and local authorities (Autonomous Communities and Provinces in Spain, Regions and Department in France), as well as a many other actors associated to the cross-border governance. The growing recognition of the importance of joint planning when dealing with cross-border issues led to the emergence of a considerable number of European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) which cover the Pyrenees Massif.

Figure 1. Case study area



Source: Website CTP (2017)

This case study is specific in the context of the ESPON COMPASS project as it is the only cross-border case study. Therefore the report mainly focuses on the “**cross-border region**” **dimension** and on interactions between national spatial planning systems and on the role of territorial cooperation programmes in supporting spatial planning related projects.

Three good practice examples are analysed (Table 1):

- Cross-border strategic planning in the Euroregion Aquitania-Navarra-Euskadi (cross-border but also relevant for Support for local economy),

- Intelligent Territorial Monitoring in Navarre (also relevant for Polycentricity and suburbanization),
- Pyrenean Climate Change Observatory (also relevant for Natural and cultural heritage).

The report is based on extensive desk research and seven in-depth interviews, including eight relevant organisations involved in the cross-border dynamics (See Appendix).

Table 1. Examples and good practice study in the cross border region Pyrenees (Spain-France)

Case study regions		Thematic issues						Convergence objectives
Name	Code	Polycentricity and suburbanization	Peripheries and other specific regions	Cross-border regions	Support for local economy	Transport infrastructure and accessibility	Natural and cultural heritage	
Nouvelle Aquitaine	FR61							E
Basque Country	ES21			Ex/P				
Navarra	ES22							
Huesca	ES241							

*Ex - possible example to study ,*

*P – possible good practices to study, all cross-border examples and good practices are treat as one ,*

*C - Convergence,*

*R - Regional competitiveness and employment,*

*E - European territorial cooperation.*

## **2 General characteristics of the cross-border region Spain France**

The Pyrenees region between Spain and France, including Andorra, is a European cross-border region with a long tradition of cooperation that is based on common natural and socioeconomic challenges (rural development, infrastructure and service provision), on similar historic and linguistic roots (Basque, Occitan) and also on common cultural and political interests (e.g. cooperation and coordination between the Spanish and the French Basque territories). It covers an area of 115,583 km<sup>2</sup> and is populated by approximately 15 million inhabitants.

The region covers part of the Spanish regions Basque Country, Navarre, Aragon and Catalonia, as well as the newly created French Regions of Nouvelle Aquitaine and Occitanie-Pyrénées-Méditerranée and the complete territory of Andorra. At a lower administrative level (NUTS3), the border region involves the northern Spanish provinces of Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, Álava/Araba, Navarre, La Rioja, Huesca, Zaragoza, Lleida, Girona, Barcelona and Tarragona, as well as the French Departements Pyrénées-Atlantiques, Ariège, Hautes Pyrénées, Pyrénées-Orientales.

The territory faces several and diverse challenges. First, as a mountainous region, many areas suffer from remoteness, isolation and lack of basic services and infrastructures. Communications are vital but have deficits in the central part (secondary connections as well as border crossings) and in the coastal areas (congestions). Second, the cross-border area is considerably vulnerable to the effects of both climate change and natural hazards such as droughts, floods, storms, marine submersions, torrential events, seismic activity, fires or soil erosions. To this is added the growing human presence mainly through leisure activities (e.g. skiing) that increases the exposure of the territory to risks. Third, economic activity is largely concentrated in the service sector, in particular in tourism, retail and proximity services, as well as primary activities like agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry. The firm structure is dominated by small enterprises and self-employment. Employment is many times unstable and seasonal. Fourth, there are large differences in population densities, both between urban and rural areas, as well as between the coastal areas and the interior of the Pyrenean massif, and between different regions. This situation, together with the demographic characteristics (ageing, in particular), makes it difficult for parts of the population to access basic services such as education, health, or administrative management, within the administrative territories themselves.

In turn, there are also potentials for development. There are a number of industrial and innovative activities that focus on the endogenous resources of the region. Programmes to strengthen competitiveness in the cross-border area highlight activities and clusters in agri-food, biotechnology-health, renewable energy, green sectors, and transport logistics that bear potential in terms of cooperation, including cooperation between clusters. The border area



has a rich diversity of natural resources and a large area of protected terrains, including the cross-border natural space of Monte Perdido, included in UNESCO's World Heritage List, as well as the Marine Park of the Gulf of Leon, which is the first marine natural park of the Mediterranean. There is a Pyrenean Strategy for the valorisation of biodiversity that was adopted in 2012. This strategy, although referring to the northern side, includes a cross-border monitoring committee.

There are several planning instruments to facilitate intermunicipal, interregional and cross-border spatial planning and regional development in this transnational area. The whole cross-border area is covered by the ERDF cofounded Interreg Programme (called POCTEFA 2014-2020). It is already the fifth generation of cross-border Interreg programmes, so that there is an important experience in cooperation among the local, regional and national stakeholders. The Interreg V-A Spain-France-Andorra Programme was approved by the European Commission with a total budget of € 189.3 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The programme is managed by the **Working Community of the Pyrenees (CTP<sup>1</sup>)**.

The CTP is a specific cross-border entity that was created already in 1983 with the support of the Council of Europe through signing a Protocol of Agreement in Bordeaux. In 1993, the CTP association was created. The main objective of the CTP is to contribute to the development of the Pyrenean Massif taking into account its challenges and preserving its cultural and natural wealth. To this end, the CTP tries to promote exchanges between the territories and the actors of the Pyrenean Massif, to tackle together the problems that affect the massif, to seek common solutions to identified challenges, to implement shared and structuring actions of transnational scope.

The area covered by the CTP has a population of 23.3 million inhabitants that is 4.6% of the European Union. All Spanish and French provinces and regions, as well as Andorra, participate in this formal cooperation structure. Once a year the Plenary Council is celebrated and the Presidency is rotating in alphabetical order of its members, every two years. The Executive Committee, chaired by the General Secretary and composed of representatives of all the member communities of the CTP, meets several times a year and establishes the strategic lines to follow. The CTP headquarter is in Jaca (Aragon, Spain) and has a team of 10 people coordinated by the Director of the CTP Consortium.

In order to give a new impetus to the CTP, its members signed in 2005 an Inter-Administrative Agreement of Cross-Border Cooperation that allowed the constitution of the CTP Consortium, a legal entity subject under Spanish public law. Thanks to its new legal status, the Consortium

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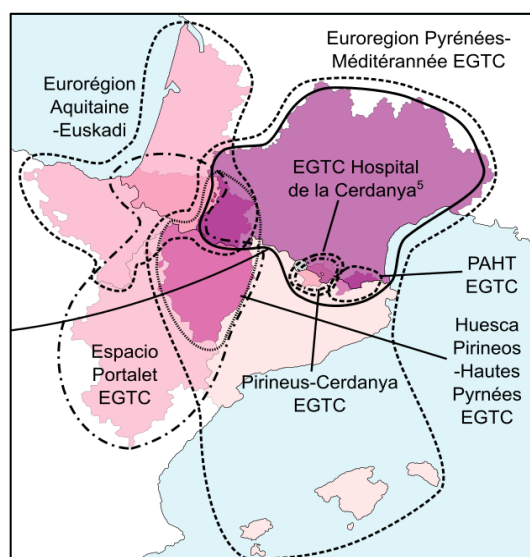
<sup>1</sup> According to its abbreviation in Spanish and French: *Comunidad de Trabajo de los Pirineos* and *Communauté de Travail des Pyrénées*.

can exercise wider competences and responsibilities (e.g. managing funding and European programs, launching common projects).

Currently, cooperation is promoted in four main areas that are organised as thematic committees: communication and infrastructures, research and training, culture, youth and sports, and sustainable development. Under each commission, different working groups are planning and carrying out joint activities. With regard to spatial planning the CTP is active mainly in two areas: in the 'Cartography group' under the 'Communication committee' and the 'Territorial Planning group' under the 'Sustainable development committee'. In the first group prepares the cartographic analysis and imaging of the cooperation area with sufficient detail to generate knowledge on the characteristics and problems of the different micro-spaces within the Pyrenees. The 'Territorial Planning group' intends to foster the exchange of experiences in land management and planning, to seek common areas of work for the participating regions, to discuss and prioritize the themes to be developed jointly and to propose joint projects. The objective is to achieve a wider harmonization of territorial policies of the member regions of the CTP.

Both, the POCTEFA Interreg Programme, as well as the thematic Working Groups of the CTP and EGTCs in the region seek to work on strategic issues for the region: assure communication across the Pyrenees, exchanges in vocational training and mobility, the launching of integrated actions on Science-Technology-Business, development of solidarity and a Pyrenean identity and culture and, finally, collaboration on projects in the fields of environment, climate, spatial planning and tourism.

Figure 2. EGTC in the Pyrenean border area (2017)



Source: Zillmer et al. 2017:23

The border region has a long tradition in cross-border cooperation. There are 7 EGTC (European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation) acting as cooperation entities in the border region: The recently established EGTC Euroregion Nouvelle Aquitaine-Euskadi-Navarra, EGTC Espacio Portalet, EGTC PAHT<sup>2</sup>, EGTC Pirineus-Cerdanya, EGTC Hospital de la Cerdanya, EGTC Huesca Pirineos-Hautes Pyrenées and EGTC Euroregion Pyrenées-Méditerranée.

One of the most prominent examples of cooperation and joint planning in this border area is the Hospital de Cerdanya. The centre, which opened on 19 September 2014, was created under the EGTC legal instrument, applying, for the first time, the joint management of a health facility by two public health systems from neighbouring countries. The added value of the hospital is that it provides access to specialised healthcare to the French population (14,500) of the Cerdanya plateau. Previously, this population had no access to the existing Spanish hospital across the border, and had to travel 105 km to Perpignan to access specialised care. The existence of the cross-border hospital fosters improvements in research and innovation, employment and mobility and social inclusion<sup>3</sup>.

Overall, the creation of the CTP in 1983 and its transformation in Consortium in 2005 – taking over the management of the Interreg POCTEFA programme – have been milestones in cross-border cooperation in the Pyrenees. Since its inception, the CTP has been a germ of territorial cooperation and has been present in all regions of the Pyrenean territory.

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<sup>2</sup> Pays d'Art et d'Histoire Transfrontalier Les Vallées Catalanes du Tech et du Ter.

<sup>3</sup> See also, Zillmer et al. 2017:38.

### 3 General overview of thematic issue in the cross-border region

Spatial Planning, in particular for environmental protection and management, tourism planning and climate change adaptation, is one of the strategic areas of cross-border cooperation in the Pyrenees. Other fields that are tackled from a cross-border planning perspective are: smart growth based on innovation and knowledge for economic development, as well as accessibility, transport and infrastructure including cross-border transport, labour mobility and the development and improvement of cross-border social public services.

Thematic issues	National		Regional		Local	
	Level of importance	Impact of the cohesion policy	Level of importance	Impact of the cohesion policy	Level of importance	Impact of the cohesion policy
Cross-border cooperation and planning	1	2	2	3	3	3

Cross-border cooperation and joint planning have a strong importance at local level. Here, the importance of cooperation becomes tangible, e.g. when it comes to streamline different administrative frameworks for environmental protection or to cooperate on the delivery of basic services, as it is the case in the example of the Hospital of Cerdanya. Taking into account the overall importance of the POCTEFA Interreg Programme in the specific border area, also the impact of EU Cohesion policy is very strong at the local level, in particular in the specific cross-border area and to a lesser extent in regional capitals and areas not located at the border. The Interreg Programmes are a specific instrument to cooperate and to fund together relevant projects, when regional or national funds alone sometimes lack the cross-border perspective and the necessary spaces for cooperation with the local and regional administrations on the other side of the border. Cross-border cooperation can take place at several levels (border cities and urban areas, rural border areas, municipal, province level, functional areas, such as areas of natural protection or cultural heritage sites). It is as well multi-thematic by definition and regards all aspects of human interaction (e.g. transport, labour mobility, education, culture, natural and environmental protection, economic development). The cooperation involves not only the public sector institutions but also private entities and other social and not-for-profit organisations<sup>4</sup>.

At regional level, i.e. for the Autonomous Communities in Spain or the Departments and Regions in France, the cross-border cooperation and joint planning is of moderate but

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<sup>4</sup> As commented by various interviewees.

growing importance. The Pyrenean border area is part of their territorial planning, but the regions have also other geographical areas and policy sectors to attend. However, a proof of their interest is the active participation in the CTP and in one or various EGTC to promote certain strategic issues from a cross-border point of view. One example is the Pyrenean Climate Change Observatory and its follow-up projects.

The Regional Authorities are supported by the EU Cohesion Policy in their efforts, not only by the Interreg POCTEFA Programme but also by other Interreg Programmes (Atlantic Area, SUDOE, Europe), other European Programmes (e.g. ESPON, URBACT, H2020), as well as by Regional ERDF, ESF and EAFRD Programmes. So, overall, the Cohesion Policy has a strong impact on the cross-border cooperation at regional level<sup>5</sup>.

At national level, the cross-border cooperation and joint planning is of low importance. The national level is important to offer an overall cooperation framework (e.g. bilateral or trilateral national agreements), and to prepare overall conditions so that cross-border cooperation becomes possible, e.g. to agree on the mutual recognition of education certificates, to allow border crossings for residents, to allow for labour mobility in the border region, to agree on fiscal rules in the border area etc. Therefore, even if the actual presence of the national level administration in the border area is reduced, the national authorities are important for cross-border cooperation. One example is the Spanish-French Transport Observatory for the Pyrenean border area<sup>6</sup>. The monitoring and joint analysis of transport and border crossings is a necessary step to allow for joint planning and improvement of transport infrastructure.

Also at the national level, the impact of cohesion policy to promote cross-border cooperation and joint planning is considered as important. The overall framework of territorial cooperation through the Interreg Programmes, covering not only cross-border cooperation but also transnational and macro-regional/sea-basin cooperation affects the predisposition of Member States to cooperate and to consider joint planning as an option within their national territories. For example, the Pyrenean border region is not only part of the POCTEFA Interreg Programme, but also of the Interreg South-West Europe, the Eastern part participates also in the Interreg MED Programme and the Western part in the Interreg Atlantic Area Programme. The national level has an important function as coordinating body of all territorial cooperation programmes of a given country. National strategic guidelines are important to design the EU Cohesion Programmes in the first place.

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<sup>5</sup> As commented by various interviewees.

<sup>6</sup>

[https://www.fomento.gob.es/MFOM/LANG\\_CASTELLANO/ATENCION\\_CIUDADANO/OBSERVATORIOS/OBSERVATORIOS\\_TRAFICO/FRANCIA/](https://www.fomento.gob.es/MFOM/LANG_CASTELLANO/ATENCION_CIUDADANO/OBSERVATORIOS/OBSERVATORIOS_TRAFICO/FRANCIA/)

## 4 Cross-border region Spain-France

### 4.1 Thematic issues problems as a ‘cross-border-region’

Territorial planning in the cross-border region is determined by two different administrative framework systems, the French and the Spanish one. In both systems, the regional level (i.e. the *Departments* and *Regions* in France and the *Comunidades Autónomas* in Spain) is responsible for spatial planning and territorial development. More specific territorial and urban planning is carried out at regional and local level. At national level, France is more active in supporting cross-border spatial planning, whereas in Spain the national level mainly establishes the legal and policy framework for cooperation that is then actively carried out by the regional and local stakeholders as well as through European Territorial Cooperation Programmes. France, having many border regions with different countries and with rather specific challenges, supports cross-border analysis and planning, in particular, through the MOT<sup>7</sup>. The Cross-Border Operational Mission (*Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière - MOT*) is an association that was set up in 1997 by the French government. It is supported at national level by the Commissariat Général à l'Égalité des Territoires (CGET - General Commission for Territorial Equality), the Ministries of Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Interior and Overseas France, and the Caisse des Dépôts. Its network is comprised by a wide number of players in border territories (e.g. regions, provinces, municipalities, groupings of local authorities and territorial authorities, cross-border structures, urban planning agencies, federations, networks etc.). This positioning facilitates a structured dialogue between national and European authorities as well as local and regional players.

A priori, spatial planning on both sides of the border does not consider the cross-border perspective in the usual planning practice. However, keeping in mind cross-border issues already for many decades, e.g. transport and logistics, natural parks planning and joint disaster and emergency management, new entities such as the *Working Community of the Pyrenees* or the *Euroregions* have been introduced in the territorial governance system to find new areas for joint analysis, joint planning and joint implementation of sectoral policies. France, through the MOT, supports cross-border spatial planning with a series of instruments and tools<sup>8</sup>, such as the ‘Platform of the Cross-border strategic committee on observation’ or the ‘MOT Atlas of cross-border cooperation’ that offers detailed statistical data and visualised information on cross-border flows and challenges.

After many years of cooperation, specific Thematic Committees or Networks, such as the Pyrenean Observatory for Climate Change have been created to carry out joint analysis with coordinated indicators in the cross-border area. Joint implementation of projects and

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/en/the-mot/mot-presentation/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/ressources/themes/observation/observation-3/>

programmes in the border area is facilitated to a great extent by EU Cohesion Policy, i.e. Interreg programmes. This means, that especially in the cross-border areas and with regard to cross-border issues, planning systems and sectoral policies are well intertwined and have a positive impact on each other.

## **4.2 Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

### **4.2.1 Increasing impact of cross-border cooperation on spatial planning systems**

The work of the Spain-France cross-border organisations shows **strong relationships between spatial planning and sectoral policies** with cross-border relevance in the cross-border space. The Thematic Committees and Working groups of the CTP cover not only planning issues (working groups on territorial planning and cartography), but also sectoral policy issues with a territorial annotation such as transport (working groups on cross-border public transport and air transport), communications (working group on digital broadcasting technologies), training and research (working groups on both themes), environment and tourism (working groups on both themes). The CTP is well intertwined with the Interreg V-A programme 'POCTEFA'. The CTP acts as managing authority of the programme (from 2007) and activities of the CTP are supported by the programme. In recent years, the CTP has focused most of its resources (human, financial) to the Programme. The POCTEFA programme supports initiatives related to spatial planning mostly under axis n°2 "To promote climate change adaptation and risk prevention and management" and axis n°4 "To foster the mobility of goods and people".

Participation to EU-funded cross-border cooperation through the POCTEFA programme evolved over time. Interviewees welcomed the diversification of types and backgrounds of participants from the first programme (starting in 1990) which mostly involved local authorities, research centres and few NGOs to the current fifth programme (Interreg V-A POCTEFA 2014-2020) which funds projects including an increasing number of civil society actors and private businesses. Some regional representatives however regret that there are still only few inter-enterprises cooperation. This trend is reflected in the content of the projects themselves as noted by the representative of the Department Pyrénées-Atlantiques. The first phase of cross-border cooperation (1990-1999) was dominated by projects arising from twinning initiatives. It evolved towards cultural, touristic and environmental cooperation in the early 2000s. 'Soft' infrastructures projects (cross-border cycle paths, winter accessibility plans for mountain pass) started to emerge around 2010. Interreg V period (2014-2020) marked the emergence of a number of economic and social development projects involving local and regional business actors.

Therefore, the promotion and protection of the **natural and cultural heritage** have been since the early times of cooperation an important part of the cross-border planning and joint

activities in the Pyrenean area. This is, of course, favoured by similar landscape and environmental challenges, as well as by similar cultural and linguistic patterns on both sides of the border. Sectoral policies in the areas of Culture, Tourism and Environment of local and regional authorities in the Pyrenees are increasingly having a cross-border dimension. Also, by joining forces with regions, provinces and municipalities on the other side of the border, the critical mass of stakeholders increases, leading to more adaptive and innovative policy approaches in spatial planning with regard to the cultural and natural heritage.

In the last decade, **transportation issues** (e.g. traffic fluency, road security, rail connections, cycle paths connections), which raised major spatial planning challenges, gained momentum among regional stakeholders on both side of the border. Several EGTC were created and specifically target this topic. For instance, the EGTC Espacio Portalet aims at enhancing and securing road traffic on the Portalet pass while promoting historical and cultural aspects of the area. Transport is also one of the priorities of the EGTC Nouvelle-Aquitaine-Euskadi-Navarra which dedicates a large part of its resources to it. The EGTC positions itself as an initiator and a facilitator in the development of transport projects. It got involved through lobbying actions in the restructuring of the Hendaye train station as a multi-modal hub or the doubling of the railway line Eusko Tren-Topo (Hendaye – San Sebastian). It launched or coordinated studies on transport offer (e.g. the Spanish/French High-Speed Train network, cross-border bus lines using motorways, cross-border cycle paths). It developed soft tools to ease the use of the transportation network across the border in the Bilbao-Bayonne area (e.g. 'Transfermuga' - trilingual web portal for transport users). According to the representative of the EGTC, these actions have been made possible thanks to the structure of the EGTC which relies on dedicated resources to develop cross-border interest. The EGTC also has the capacity to deal with the multilevel embeddedness of development issues in cross-border contexts, thanks to its technical expertise, local knowledge and European networks.

A joint or coordinated **support for local economy** is a rather new area of cross-border cooperation. Even if the economic structure and challenges on both sides of the border are similar, cooperation requires the involvement of more players and more diverse interests (e.g. public, private, academic). However, there are positive examples, that the support to the economy is also possible under a cross-border approach. For example, the Strategic Development Plan for the Euroregion Aquitania-Navarra-Euskadi focuses on the cooperation in strategic support to innovation and development, promoting cross-border cooperation of clusters and smart specialisation priorities. With this, the regional Smart Specialisation Strategies, which are key for ERDF funding in the regions, are linked and put into a larger territorial framework. This cooperation across regions on innovation is one of the key priorities



of the European Commission in the 2014-2020 period and, in particular, since 2017<sup>9</sup>. Other examples of links between local economy support and ESIF are: the Euroregion Pirineos Mediterráneo Eurocampus<sup>10</sup> online platform for learning mobility and R&D networks in areas such as e-Health, water and the food industry or the Creamed business incubator network<sup>11</sup>. According to the CTP representative, attracting private businesses into cross-border initiatives is challenging because of the specific requirements of the EU Interreg programmes, such as rules on State aid, the low competitiveness of territorial cooperation funding (65% co-financing) compared to COSME and Horizon2020 funding (100% co-financing) and the difficulties to reach SMEs which could be interested in participating in projects. The CTP as managing authority of the POCTEFA programme tries to reach out to SMEs through Clusters and Business Associations, but also using Universities and Research Centres as a lever. The integration of local SMEs into research and innovation projects is regarded in the evaluation by the programme as a positive element and an indicator of the territorialisation of benefits.

Cross-border spatial planning also helps to tackle the issue of specific needs of **peripheries and other specific areas**. In the Pyrenees, all regions can be considered as peripheral from their respective national point of view, but gain centrality, if they are seen as part of one integrated Pyrenean space. In addition, large parts of the Pyrenean regions are mountainous and, therefore, with a specific territorial conditions that determines their needs for planning and development. Interviewees consider that the cross-order cooperation and, in particular, European Cooperation programmes help to tackle issues that are related to the peripheral and specific territorial character of the regions more easily than this could be done via national policies only. Therefore, territorial development of cross-border regions can be seen as conducive to a differentiated approach to spatial planning that takes into account the specific needs of peripheral areas.

An integrated planning and development of the Pyrenean area, as promoted by the CTP and the Euroregions and other EGTC leads also to more **polycentricity** with regard to the different territorial models of the regions and provinces involved. Through cooperation efforts and the consideration of differentiated territorial needs, smaller population cores are strengthened, in comparison to the capital cities of regions. For example, the Pyrenean areas of the Spanish Autonomous communities of Aragon and Navarre maintain in relevant planning documents a specific role and function within the spatial regional system. Connections and communications with the capital cities (Zaragoza, Pamplona) are strengthened. For example, the location of the CTP headquarter in Jaca (Aragón) helps to

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<sup>9</sup> Please, see for more detail the European Commission's Communication 'Strengthening Innovation in Europe's Regions: Strategies for resilient, inclusive and sustainable growth' (2017)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.eurocampusweb.eu/es>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.eurocreamd.eu/creamd/es/elsVivers.html>

strengthen the function of the city as a cooperation node. In general, new legal figures such as Euroregions or EGTC help smaller towns and cities to gain centrality within smaller, more specific territories.

Actors working in close cooperation with project holders (representatives of local and regional administration, representatives of EGTCs) mention the multi-faceted functions of territorial cooperation funding in a cross-border context. A project co-funded under a transnational or cross-border operational programme can rely on a financial support but also benefits from the **legitimacy** associated with EU support, which helps to bring together stakeholders and generates a stable and trustful framework for action, also in spatial planning.

#### **4.2.2 Cross-border cooperation in planning: discrepancies in multi-level governance**

Across the interviews, key stakeholders raised several barriers to cooperation in relation with spatial planning.

At a local scale, **administrative and operational discrepancies** remain one of the major bottlenecks to strengthen cooperation. Across interviews, several examples were highlighted by stakeholders. Some of the deadlocks which local actors have to face include:

- Administration and provision of services of enclaves on the other side of the border. For instance, the 'Pays Quint' is a set of Spanish enclaves in France, which are mostly inhabited by French citizens. Inhabitants face major issues with the regional administration to get access to Services of General Interests due to the peculiar local geographical setting.
- Joint work in larger infrastructures situated at the border, such as the port of Hendaye/Hondarribia. The port of Hendaye/Hondarribia is a cross-border estuary with river basins in France and Spain. Both administrations struggle to find a procedure which would enable the mud-dredging operations in a framework compatible with both national legislations.
- Coordination of cross-border emergency services. Even though strongly needed, emergency services are difficult to organise and coordinate at the border. Some interventions were already conducted outside the usual legal framework, if needed.
- Coordinated operations at the border. As part of the activities of the EGTC Espacio Portalet, local authorities created a joint centre to organise snow-removal operations on both sides of the Portalet pass. Operations were shortly hindered because Spanish workers were not allowed to use machines provided by French services due to particular insurance conditions.

Some interviewees highlight that a possible solution for solving persistent obstacles could be an intergovernmental commission France-Spain if adequately endowed. However, several interviewees also mentioned that Spanish and French authorities (national as well as regional) have slightly different views as regards priorities to be fostered in cross-border cooperation. French authorities tend to focus on transportation and local development issues, while Spanish authorities also prioritise innovation, research and SME competitiveness. This is reflected in the recent spatial redefinition of the Interreg V POCTEFA. The POCTEFA area

for the period 2007-2013 included mostly Department (FR) and Provinces (ES) as part of the 'Main area'). In parallel with the end of the two tier inclusion system (main area / associated territories), the Spanish authorities decided to transfer the POCTEFA assignments to Autonomous Communities leading to an enlargement of the eligible area to the south, and the inclusion of a number of large cities and metropolises in Spain (Bilbao, Vitoria, Zaragoza, Tarragona, Barcelona). In parallel the territorial reform in France (2014-2015) which eventually led to the merging of several regions could weaken the cross-border interests at the regional scale in the near future.

Local and regional actors note the difficulties to **connect the French and Spanish multilevel governance frameworks**. According to OPCC representative, there is a shared lack of knowledge about the distribution of sectoral responsibilities and competences on the other side of the border. An organisation willing to develop a cooperation with counterparts on the other side of the border often does not always have access to proper information regarding who are the most relevant counterparts and lack the capacities to trigger the dialogue. For instance, measuring and adapting to climate change requires to have access to sound meteorological data which in a cross-border area requires to join comparable data from both countries. However the public meteorological system in France is monitored at State level, while in Spain responsibilities are shared between the State and Autonomous Communities. A cross-border organisation, such as CTP or a joint observatory like the PCCO acting as knowledge pool and facilitator can help to bridge two or more governance systems. In many cases a better overview on cross-border multilevel governance is needed for a better alignment of stakeholders in spatial planning processes.

### **4.3 Recommendation**

To sum up, to enhance joint spatial planning perspectives in cross-border context the following is suggested:

- For national authorities, to support the work of an 'intergovernmental commission' (or equivalent) with appropriate resources to speed up the resolution of administrative and operational deadlocks for certain cross-border activities. Local joint actions involving regulatory planning are much impacted by administrative mismatches.
- For national and regional authorities, to use EGTC and other cross-border entities as knowledge pool and soft cooperation facilitator. As they are dedicated to cross-border or transnational cooperation, EGTC can be identified by project holders as a legitimate contact organisation. Transports, as well as environmental protection or the rehabilitation of historical landmarks requires a long-term reliable expertise which an EGTC can guaranty. The case study also shows that EGTC can significantly enhance the fast and efficient delivery of cross-border projects.

- For local and regional authorities, to support small scale and grassroots actors willing to cooperate through 1) appropriate project engineering structures, located as close as possible to the need, which can orientate and support 'to-be' project holder in their search for financial sources (at the sub-regional scale) and 2) micro-funding for small project to kick-start cooperation and enable experimentation / feasibility studies.

## 5 Good Practice: Cross-border strategic planning in the Euroregion Aquitania-Navarra-Euskadi

The **Strategic Development Plan for the Euroregion Aquitania-Navarra-Euskadi** and the projects included in it can be considered a good practice, as they build on the guidelines of the strategy Europe 2020 to define a common field for cross-border action and to stimulate new and improved cross-border planning contents and practice. EU Cohesion policy is a major tool to implement cross-border projects.

After a first cooperation fund for common projects was created in 1992, the first joint project was a cross-border logistic platform (2004). In 2011, the Euroregion Aquitania (FR) – Euskadi/Basque Country (ES) was set up as EGTC in order to extend the cross-border cooperation. In 2016, the Spanish region of Navarre joined the EGTC.

On 19 December 2016 the Strategic Plan of the Euroregion Aquitania-Navarra-Euskadi was presented. The event was attended by 300 people. The document, aligned with the European priorities (i.e. Europe2020 and TA2020), has been developed within a framework of open governance and concertation. Throughout the process of developing the strategy, a survey was carried out among the relevant cooperation actors and in-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders. In addition, thematic working groups and two open online consultations were organised.

The Plan is structured in two parts: a Euroregional Analysis, which includes a socio-economic diagnosis of the Aquitaine-Euskadi Euroregion<sup>12</sup>, a balance of cooperation between the two regions during the period 2007-2013, an analysis of the strategic framework of territorial cooperation in Europe, as well as a SWOT analysis. The second part of the document, entitled Euroregional Strategy, is structured around four strategic priority axes and proposes more than forty actions to be developed with the agents of cooperation during the period 2014-2020:

1. Priority: Euroregional citizenship (Multilingualism, Culture, Youth, Sports)
2. Priority: Economy of Knowledge, Innovation and Business Competitiveness (Higher Education and Student Mobility, Research-Innovation and Economic Development, Training and Employment)
3. Priority: Sustainable Territory (Transport, Energy, Environment, Agriculture and Agri-food, Tourism)
4. Priority: Open Governance (Management, Communication, Branding, Concertation)

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<sup>12</sup> At the time of developing the Strategic Plan, Navarre was not yet a part of the Euroregion. Due to this, Navarre was not considered in the Analysis.

In particular, the third priority is relevant for cross-border activity in spatial planning. In this specific cross-border region, the analysis has shown that the main challenges are poor transport infrastructures and services, inefficiencies due to lack of coordination of transport and mobility infrastructures, mass transit of goods by road, high opportunity costs associated with the delay in the high-speed rail link. On the side, the coastal natural spaces and the forests are a powerful element of cooperation. Opportunities lie in emerging activities linked to natural resources, the well preserved natural heritage, as well as in the growing tourism sector in both regions.

The Strategy confirms that in the euroregional area, there are obvious needs for cooperation to ensure that it is developed and used under sustainability criteria. The 2014-2020 Development Strategy is expected to facilitate the connectivity of the citizens and the economic sectors of the Euroregion, through appropriate infrastructures and transport services. At the same time, attention to environmental issues and collaboration around environmental issues is a key element in a context of preservation of the natural space. The use of natural resources and, in particular, the use of the existing potential in productive areas such as livestock, agriculture and forestry offers spaces for cooperation between the involved regions. Finally, cooperation in tourism should contribute to add value and make the common territory more attractive, always within a framework of high environmental quality.

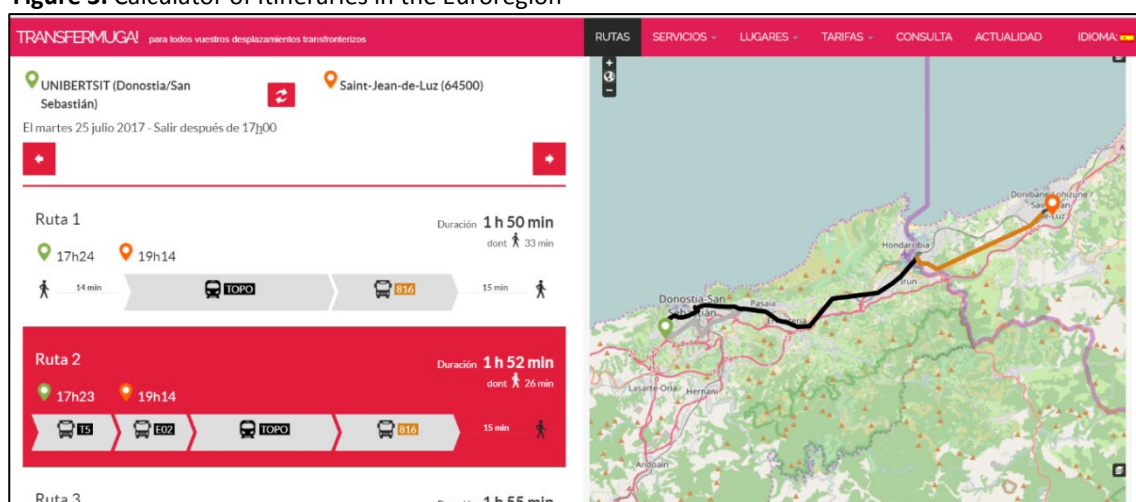
The Strategy is a **new instrument for strategic planning**, covering relevant fields of spatial planning, such as environment, transport, energy and tourism, which has not existed before. The strategy is intended to act as a guiding framework for regional and local cross-border planning. The Strategic Document serves as a reference to all the actors in territorial cooperation (private and public), but also to the EGTC itself for the planning and prioritization of their own policies.

The Strategy **introduces and promotes new issues and contents**, as a consequence of its alignment with EU documents such as the Europe 2020 strategy or the TA2020. It promotes territorial cohesion with highlighting the different needs of specific territories (coastal, mountainous, urban etc.). It introduced new themes like climate change, ocean energy as well as cross-border cooperation in higher education and research, border integration of public local transport and of national railway infrastructures and services.

The EGTC and the strategic document promote a **change in common planning practice** as they strengthen the cross-border coordination of public and private actors and between different levels and agencies at the same level. For example, by means of the cross-border cooperation, there are now cross-border public bus lines in place (e.g. Bayonne-Irún), and even a joint cross-border ticket system is available. For this, the EGTC involved not only the regional authorities and public transport enterprises at both sides of the border, but also the

French Embassy in Madrid. Also, with the participation of diverse transport operators an Information Portal<sup>13</sup> in 4 languages offers now information on cross-border intermodal transport possibilities. Behind this Portal is a sophisticated new data integration system with data from all relevant transport operators at both sides of the border. The 'Calculator of Itineraries' calculates the different transport modes, time needed and even the CO2 produced by the different transport means for the specific journey.

**Figure 3.** Calculator of Itineraries in the Euroregion



Source: [www.transfermuga.eu](http://www.transfermuga.eu)

The Euroregional Strategy is completely **aligned with EU Cohesion Policy**, as it is demonstrated already in the title and time period of the Strategy (2014-2020) which is in line with the current ESIF funding period. In the document, it is also stated that the strategy is in line with the requirements of the EU Cohesion Policy regulatory framework. As funding sources to implement the proposed projects, the strategy mentions the relevant Interreg Programmes (Interreg POCTEFA, SUDOE, Atlantic Area, Interreg Europe, but also the corresponding Regional Programmes co-funded by the ERDF, ESF and EAFRD). Most strategic projects of the EGTC are, therefore, co-funded by European Funds.

From another angle, EU cohesion policy, i.e. Regional and Territorial Cooperation ESIF Programmes benefit from this cross-border strategy as the selection and implementation of meaningful projects with a long-term strategic perspective becomes easier. Coordination and consensus-building have not to be done 'from scratch' for the ESIF programmes, but ESIF Programmes can rely on already agreed strategic plans and existing partnerships. This helps to increase effectiveness of ESIF Programmes.

<sup>13</sup> [www.transfermuga.eu](http://www.transfermuga.eu)

Finally, the strategic document highlights the importance of the legal instrument of the 'EGTC' to support cross-border and transnational strategic and spatial planning. In fact, the understanding as 'EGTC', i.e. as one body that is responsible for a certain territory has provoked the elaboration of the Strategic Plan and the broader coverage of planning. *"In this regard, the 2014-2020 Strategic Document should enable the EGTC to position itself as an actor and animator of the territorial cooperation."*<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Eurorregión Aquitania-Euskadi 2014:127



## 6 Good Practice: Intelligent Territorial Monitoring in Navarre

The **Territorial Monitoring System of Navarre** is an example of a good practice as it links objectives for territorial development with concrete proposals on sectoral and territorial policy, taking into account the relationship with on-going projects by the Government of Navarre. The system of annual reports and evaluations tries to answer the question of how to implement sectoral policies (including EU Cohesion Policy) taking into account territorial impacts and the objectives of territorial cohesion.

In 2005, the Territorial Strategy for Navarre 2025 (TSN – *Estrategia Territorial de Navarra*)<sup>15</sup> was officially presented to show the development model for Navarre until 2030, taking into account the wider geographical context of Navarre including the cross-border situation. The TSN has the ultimate objective of promoting the sustainable and territorially balanced development of the Region of Navarre. In this sense, it includes a set of measures intended to serve as a guide to the actions of private agents and public bodies in Navarre in a context of long-term vision (25 years) and to seek wider intersectoral coordination, from the point of territorial coherence of impacts. The TSN serves as a reference framework and guiding instrument for the elaboration of Territorial Planning Plans. It is the first application in Spain of a non-normative planning instrument at regional level (it is not a Law, but an agreement of the Parliament and the Economic and Social Council of Navarre).

To achieve the desired territorial model, the TSN proposes three major strategies: 1. To develop a territory that is cohesive and competitive at European level. 2. Ensure that the territory is well connected through different communication systems. 3. To achieve a high level of cultural and natural quality for the whole Navarre territory. In line with European Strategies, namely Europe 2020 and the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020, the Navarre Strategy establishes three major socioeconomic development objectives ‘social cohesion’, ‘sustainability’ and ‘competitiveness’, as well as three territorial objectives ‘accessibility’, ‘polycentric and balanced development’ and ‘efficient management of cultural and natural heritage’.

Once approved, a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system was set up for the Territorial Strategy of Navarre. Within this system, the ‘Social Council of Territorial Policy’ monitors annually the Territorial Strategy of Navarre, using the indicators and data of the Territorial Observatory of Navarre (*Observatorio Territorial de Navarra*)<sup>16</sup>. The annual monitoring reports aim to evaluate the territorial development of the region in the six dimensions proposed by the TSN (competitiveness, social cohesion, environmental

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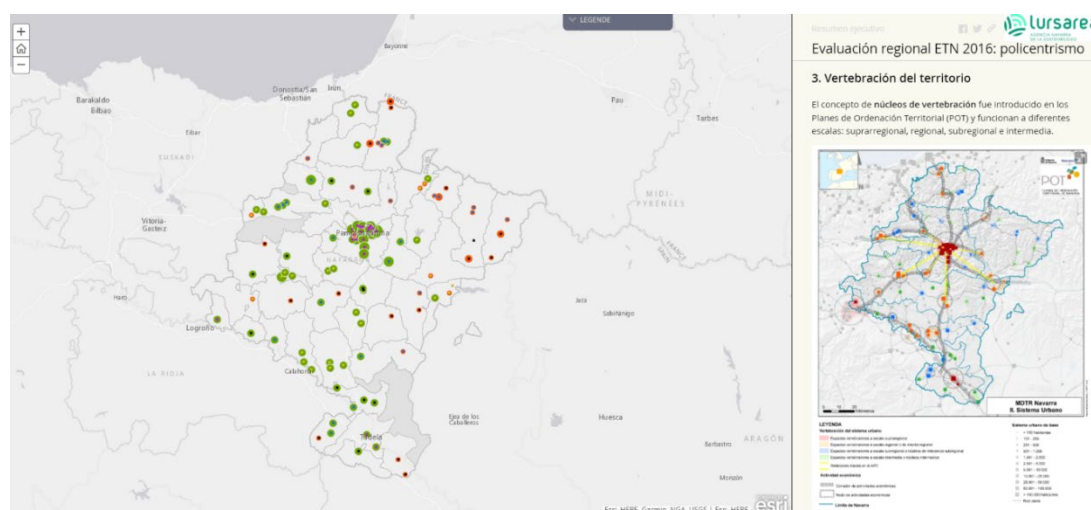
<sup>15</sup> See the territorial strategy of Navarre at [http://www.navarra.es/home\\_es/](http://www.navarra.es/home_es/)

<sup>16</sup> See: <http://nasuvinsa.es/es/presentacion-del-otn>

conservation, polycentrism, accessibility, natural and cultural heritage), as well as the degree of implementation of strategic options and of its model of territorial development.

The annual monitoring is carried out by the Territorial Observatory of Navarre, located at LURSAREA<sup>17</sup> within NASUVINSA<sup>18</sup> for the 'Social Council of Territorial Policy' with the guidance and collaboration of the Department of Rural Development, Environment and Local Administration of the Government of Navarre. In the analysis of maps/data, conclusions and proposal of policies other departments of the Regional Government have participated (Vice Presidency of Economic Development, Vice Presidency of Social Rights, Education, Health), as well as other agents that promote local and rural development.

Figure 4. Web Application of the 2016 Annual Report of the Territorial Observatory of Navarre



Source: <http://nasuvinsa.maps.arcgis.com/>

For the annual monitoring of the TSN 29 indicators from the Indicator System for Territorial Development of Navarre (SIOTN)<sup>19</sup> are reviewed and then compared to EU and Spanish average values, to an average of 15 European reference regions<sup>20</sup>, as well as to the situation

<sup>17</sup> Navarre Agency for Sustainability

<sup>18</sup> Navarre de Suelo y Vivienda, NASUVINSA is a public company of the Government of Navarre in charge of housing and industrial land management.

<sup>19</sup> The SIOTN is structured in four main areas: Natural and cultural heritage, Urban system, Communications, transport and infrastructures and Coordination. Each of these axes corresponds to the chapters of the 5 Territorial Plans that cover Navarre. The mentioned areas are divided into sub-themes and reflected in approximately 130 indicators.

<sup>20</sup> Comparison with an average of 15 EU regions with a similar socio-economic profile according to the analysis of the Smart Specialisation Strategy of Navarre (RIS3). The regions are: AT33 Tirol, ITH2 Trent, AT21 Kärnten, FR63 Limousin, NL1 Northern Netherlands, DE5 Bremen, AT34 Vorarlberg, NL3 Western Netherlands, BE3 Wallonia, SK01 Bratislava, ITH5 Emilia Romagna, FR43 France Comté, ES21 Basque Country, ES24 Aragon, UKN Northern Ireland.

in previous years. Each indicator is expressed on maps by geographical sub-areas. This allows to analyse and visualize the differences between territories and the evolution of territorial cohesion. The whole monitoring process reflects a process of comprehensive and intelligent territorial evaluation. The socio-economic and territorial processes are analysed thoroughly and evaluated according to a) the six guiding principles for territorial development as proposed by the TSN, b) the diverse situation and needs in the main five territories in Navarre<sup>21</sup>, and c) the detailed relationship with 24 sectoral policies in Navarre<sup>22</sup>. This facilitates an effective 'territorial evaluation' and the definition of recommendation concerning sectoral policies, current policy strategies and programmes as well as of new projects.

Therefore, the territorial monitoring supports the implementation of sectoral policies, and thus, of ESIF Operational Programmes in Navarre, i.e. ERDF Programme, ESF Programme and EAFRD Programme. An interesting cross-fertilisation takes place between the territorial planning and the sectoral policies in Navarre. As a concrete example, some elements of the territorial monitoring are used within the Monitoring system of the RIS 3 Smart Specialization Strategy of Navarre, which defines the priorities for Research and Innovation and is a compulsory instrument for using ERDF funds on Research and Innovation. The RIS 3 strategy uses some of the Territorial Monitoring indicators to show progress on its 'territorial deployment'.

The Territorial Monitoring System of Navarre allows to derive differentiated conclusions for the different territories with regard to rural development, transport policy or industrial policy. It allows also to introduce considerations on specific cross-border or macro-regional issues in the analysis and, therefore, in the definition of sectoral policies. As an example, Navarre participated in an Interreg Atlantic Area project<sup>23</sup> from 2012 to 2014 to promote and develop an Atlantic Freight Corridor through the creation of a transnational network of public administrations and rail, logistics and port operators, both public and private. The Territorial Observatory of Navarre took the results of this project into consideration and elaborated a comprehensive report on the implications for Navarre's territorial and sectoral planning<sup>24</sup>.

Further links with EU Cohesion Policy are achieved through the regular participation of the Territorial Observatory in EU projects (e.g. Interreg, LIFE, ESPON etc.) in order to exchange

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<sup>21</sup> For further territorial planning Navarre has defined 5 Territorial Plans for the larger geographical areas within Navarre: POT 1: Pyrenees, POT 2: Atlantic Navarre, POT 3: Central Area, POT 4: Medium Zones, POT 5: Axis of the Ebro.

<sup>22</sup> Water, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Demography, Social Rights, Rural Development, Retail, Social Economy, Industrial Development, Tourism, Education, Employment, Energy, RTDI, Gender equality, Inner-urban public transport, Railways and Air Transport, Highways, Public Sector Modernization, Spatial and Land Planning, Waste, Social Services, Telecommunication/IT, Housing.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.atlanticrailcorridor.com/es/>

<sup>24</sup> Observatorio Territorial de Navarra 2016

experiences and to generate relevant knowledge in new and emerging areas, such as transport networks, services of general interest, enterprise zones etc.

## 7 Good Practice: Pyrenean Climate Change Observatory

The **Pyrenean Climate Change Observatory (PCCO)**<sup>25</sup> can be considered a good practice. It promotes an integrated and bioregional (cross-border) understanding of the effects of the climate change and promotes action to minimise and mitigate the negative consequences of climate change, both for nature and for human activities. The creation of this observatory, covering three states, is a novelty in Europe. It has been created and is maintained and enriched with support of EU Cohesion Policy.

Mountain areas are very vulnerable to climate change and impacts can be considerable on natural systems and on strategic socio-economic sectors, such as tourism, forestry, agrifood, energy etc. Climate change does not know about borders. This is why individual, national and uncooperative work is meaningless within the framework of a common bioregion like the Pyrenees.

Based on these considerations, the Working Community of the Pyrenees created the Pyrenean Observatory on Climate Change in 2010. Beside monitoring and understanding the evolution of the climate in the Pyrenees, the aim of the Observatory is to anticipate the impacts of climate change to provide the socio-economic sectors and the most vulnerable natural areas of the massif with the opportunity to adapt to this phenomenon. Organized by the members of the CTP, the Pyrenean Observatory of Climate Change involves thematic groups (e.g. air quality, energy, forests, biodiversity, glaciers, spatial planning, weather/climate etc.) with professional territorial agents in the implementation of their projects. The Pyrenean Observatory on Climate Change is nourished and supported by a network of actors and local officials from various support structures. Its operation is articulated around an Executive Committee, a Scientific Committee and a Committee for Technical Implementation.

The functions of the PCCO are the following:

- Share existing knowledge on the impacts of climate change on the Pyrenees.
- Analyse the vulnerability of natural environments to climate change and its socio-economic impact.
- Prepare recommendations and operational advice to facilitate a better adaptation of economic activities and natural environments, while giving preference to the harmonious development of the massif and its populations.
- Inform pedagogically the civil society and socio-economic actors.
- Contribute to the development of the European and international visibility of the Pyrenees in the field of observation and Climate change and support the establishment of a European Observatory network.

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.opcc-ctp.org/en>

The first design and set-up of the Observatory was conducted within the framework of a POCTEFA Interreg projects (ERDF co-funded). This initial project included analysis in five relevant areas: climate, water, biodiversity, forests, natural hazards, as well as two transversal actions on remote sensing (of snow covers and vegetation) and adaptation measures. The result of this first project was the creation of the geoportal which is now integrated in the portal of the PCCO.

The portal is built on extensive datasets and geospatial information that led to the development of an indicator database that allows to monitor evolution of climate change signals (e.g. evolution of average temperature, evolution of 'high-risk' territories). In addition, a common floristic atlas was developed with the aim of characterizing Pyrenean diversity and identifying the most vulnerable species. Eight species were identified as highly representative to analyse vulnerability to climate change.

Figure 5. Web screenshot of the Pyrenean Observatory of Climate Change



Source: <http://www.opcc-ctp.org/en>

Among the results of the PCCO project were: 266 published studies, 29 layers of geographic information, 57 organizations registered in the directory, as well as 74 meta-datasets. The project identified and published a catalogue of 103 existing climate change adaptation initiatives, as well as Handbooks on adaptation projects and policies. In August 2011, an agreement was achieved between the CTP and the European Environment Agency, in order to share, enrich and promote the work of these two institutions on climate change, recognizing the Pyrenean pilot experience in this field. The POCC is connected to other relevant portals in Europe, such as Climate-ADAPT (European Climate Adaptation Platform), AdapteCCa (Spanish Climate Adaptation Platform), Wiklimat (French Climate Adaptation Platform), ONERC – (French National Observatory on Climate Change).

To date, several follow-up projects have been put on track to up-date and extend the existing information. Most projects are co-funded by the Priority Axis 2 of the POCTEFA Interreg Programme 2014-2020 (ERDF co-funded) dedicated to Climate Change Adaptation. In this context, the follow-up project on the POCC will be carried out from 2016 to 2019. POCC is now the core of a number of thematic networks, such as REPLIM, PYRADAPT, PIRAGUA, CANOPE, CLIM'PY or FLORAPYR that focus each on specific themes of climate change analysis and adaptation. Therefore, the existence of the Interreg programme allows for new forms of monitoring and an important continuity in relevant analytical work, as well as for an important cross-border perspective in territorial monitoring which would be meaningless, if carried out only within certain administrative boundaries.

Relevant local, regional and national actors in relevant sectoral policies benefit from this generation of structured information on climate change in their daily work, for example, in the management of protected natural areas. This has also a positive influence on Regional and National Programmes co-funded by ESIF within EU Cohesion Policy. For example, one of the regions in the Pyrenes area, the Basque Country (Spain), presented in 2015 its Regional Strategy on Climate Change 2050, which is linked to regional economic, agricultural, environmental, transport, industrial, housing and health policies. Many ESIF-related activities are derived from the generated information on climate change observation.

The POCC has, therefore, helped to generate data and to introduce the important theme of climate change in existing spatial planning practices in the Pyrenean cross-border area and the covered territories. It has generated new routines of cooperation and information exchange across (national and regional) borders.

The on-going action on climate change has even promoted new forms of participation. For example, in light of the citizen participation that currently exists in the collection of meteorological data, Andorra has created in 2017 a Network of Volunteer Meteorological

Observers, to which people can register who are currently obtaining information regarding the meteorological conditions of the atmosphere.



## 8 Conclusions

The France-Spain cross-border area has been at the centre of innovative cooperation and initiatives in relation to spatial planning. To date, the cooperation has been formalised with several structures such as the Working Community of the Pyrenees (CTP) or another seven EGTC in the border area.

The cross-border cooperation and joint planning activities are highly important at local level. Here, the importance of cooperation becomes tangible, e.g. when it comes to streamline different administrative frameworks for environmental protection or to cooperate on the delivery of basic services. However, also the regional and the national level are engaged and support the cross-border cooperation.

Cross-border cooperation becomes visible in day-to-day operational spatial planning as regards, for example, transport infrastructures and accessibility, and putting into value natural and cultural heritage. Climate change observation and adaptation is also an important area for cooperation.

EU Cohesion Policy is highly intertwined with spatial planning in the Pyrenean cross-border area. Local and Regional Authorities are supported by the EU Cohesion Policy in their efforts, not only by the Interreg POCTEFA Programme but also by other Interreg Programmes (Atlantic Area, SUDOE, Europe), other European Programmes (e.g. ESPON, URBACT, H2020), as well as by Regional ERDF, ESF and EAFRD Programmes.

Several interviewed actors mention the multi-faceted functions of EU territorial cooperation funding in a cross-border context. A project co-funded under a transnational or cross-border operational programme can rely on a financial support but also benefits from the legitimacy associated with EU support, which helps to bring together stakeholders and generates a stable and trustful framework for action, also for spatial planning.

Sometimes, however, the value of cooperation and EU contribution to spatial planning processes is not sufficiently visible to the public. Here, some interviewees highlight the need for analysis and evaluation of concrete and tangible results of cross-border cooperation and EU contribution, as well as the need for a better communication to the public.

When it comes to challenges, as noted by several interviewees, the coordination of multi-sectoral initiatives across an international border requires reliable and comparable information and public statistical data on territorial development and specific territorial challenges to allow for territorial comparisons at a local scale. This need is shared by all stakeholders in the Pyrenean cross-border context. Other relevant issues are the engagement of the civil society and public participation within spatial planning processes. Cross-border initiatives can and should play a role to assure both availability of information on territorial development processes and engagement of relevant stakeholders.

The analysed Good Practices present examples of cross-fertilisation between local/regional/cross-border spatial planning practice and EU Cohesion Policy.

The **Strategic Development Plan for the Euroregion Aquitania-Navarra-Euskadi** responds to a need for an integrated approach for cross-border development including transport issues, research and innovation, education and tourism. The focus of the EGTC on the cross-border local space (Euskadi – Pyrénées-Atlantiques) combined with its interregional structure (Nouvelle-Aquitaine – Euskadi – Navarre) allows for the involvement of a large array of stakeholders and multi-level approach to development issues. The Strategy is a new instrument for strategic planning, covering relevant fields of spatial planning, such as environment, transport, energy and tourism, which has not existed before. The strategy is intended to act as a guiding framework for regional and local cross-border planning. The Strategy introduces and promotes new issues and contents, as a consequence of its alignment with EU documents such as the Europe 2020 strategy or the TA2020. It promotes territorial cohesion with highlighting the different needs of specific territories (coastal, mountainous, urban etc.). From another angle, EU cohesion policy, i.e. Regional and Territorial Cooperation ESIF Programmes benefit from this cross-border strategy as the selection and implementation of meaningful projects with a long-term strategic perspective becomes easier. Coordination and consensus-building have not to be done ‘from scratch’ for the ESIF programmes, but ESIF Programmes can rely on already agreed strategic plans and existing partnerships. This helps to increase effectiveness of ESIF Programmes.

The **Territorial monitoring system of the Navarre Territorial Strategy** is a successful example of introducing a territorial perspective in regional policies, not only through linking directly to the recommendations of the European Territorial Agenda 2020 and adding relevant territorial goals (i.e. accessibility, polycentric development, management of natural and cultural heritage), but also through adding an analysis from the territorial perspective to all defined dimensions, including social cohesion and competitiveness. Once approved in 2005, a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system was set up for the Territorial Strategy. The Territorial Monitoring System allows to derive differentiated conclusions for the different territories with regard to rural development, transport policy or industrial policy. It allows also to introduce considerations on specific cross-border or macro-regional issues in the analysis and, therefore, in the definition of sectoral policies. The territorial monitoring supports the implementation of sectoral policies, and thus, of ESIF Operational Programmes in Navarre, i.e. ERDF Programme, ESF Programme and EAFRD Programme. An interesting cross-fertilisation takes place between the territorial planning and the sectoral policies in Navarre. As a concrete example, some elements of the territorial monitoring are used within the Monitoring system of the RIS 3 Smart Specialization Strategy of Navarre, which defines the priorities for Research and Innovation and is a compulsory instrument for using ERDF funds on Research and Innovation. Further links with EU Cohesion Policy are achieved through the

regular participation of the Territorial Observatory in EU projects (e.g. Interreg, LIFE, ESPON etc.) in order to exchange experiences and to generate relevant knowledge in new and emerging areas.

The **Pyrenean Climate Change Observatory** is a successful initiative as regards exchanges of data on environmental processes between France, Spain and Andorra. Beside monitoring and understanding the evolution of the climate in the Pyrenees, the aim of the Observatory is to anticipate the impacts of climate change to provide the socio-economic sectors and the most vulnerable natural areas of the massif with the opportunity to adapt to this phenomenon. In 2010, the first design and set-up of the Observatory was conducted within the framework of a POCTEFA Interreg projects (ERDF co-funded). The Observatory is being recognized at the European scale as a relevant knowledge hub for climate change measurement and adaptation and a reliable project partner for pan-European analysis of environmental data. To date, several follow-up projects have been put on track to up-date and extend the existing information. Most projects are co-funded by the Priority Axis 2 of the POCTEFA Interreg Programme 2014-2020 dedicated to Climate Change Adaptation. In this context, the follow-up project on the POCC will be carried out from 2016 to 2019. POCC is now the core of a number of thematic networks, such as REPLIM, PYRADAPT, PIRAGUA, CANOPE, CLIM'PY or FLORAPYR that focus each on specific themes of climate change analysis and adaptation. Therefore, the existence of the Interreg programme allows for new forms of monitoring and an important continuity in relevant analytical work, as well as for an important cross-border perspective in territorial monitoring which would be meaningless, if carried out only within certain administrative boundaries.

In conclusion, the case shows that in the last years, EU Cohesion Policy has contributed to the emergence of new planning instruments, procedures and tools in the Spain-France cross-border area, mainly through European territorial cooperation projects. On the other hand, spatial planning practices in the cross-border areas help to make EU Cohesion Policy programmes more effective and adapted to real needs within specific geographic territories.

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## 10 Appendix

List of persons interviewed:

<b>Lp.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Affiliation /Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>
A	15.09.2017	Pilar Maza Rodríguez	Interreg POCTEFA 2014-2020 Joint Secretariat
B	15.09.2017	Jean-Louis Valls	Working Community of the Pyrenees (CTP)
C	05.09.2017	Idoia Arauzo	Pyrenean Climate Change Observatory (OPCC-CTP)
D	05.09.2017	Julien De Labaca	Euroregion Nouvelle-Aquitaine Euskadi Navarra (EGTC)
E	13.09.2017	Santiago Fabregas Reigosa	Espacio Portalet (EGTC)
F	12.09.2017	Jean-Michel Arrivé & Ludovic Lareynie	Nouvelle Aquitaine (DG Cooperation)
G	07.09.2017	Eva Lamothe	Département 'Pyrénées-Atlantiques' (Cabinet coopération)
H	13.09.2017	Lionel Bouvet	Département 'Haute-Garonne'

# COMPASS – Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe

## **Case Study Report: Hungary**

Prepared by  
CERS HAS

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## Abbreviations

CP	Cohesion Policy
EC	European Commission
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
EGTC	European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
EU	European Union
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
TA2020	Territorial Agenda 2020
TG	Territorial Governance

# 1. Introduction

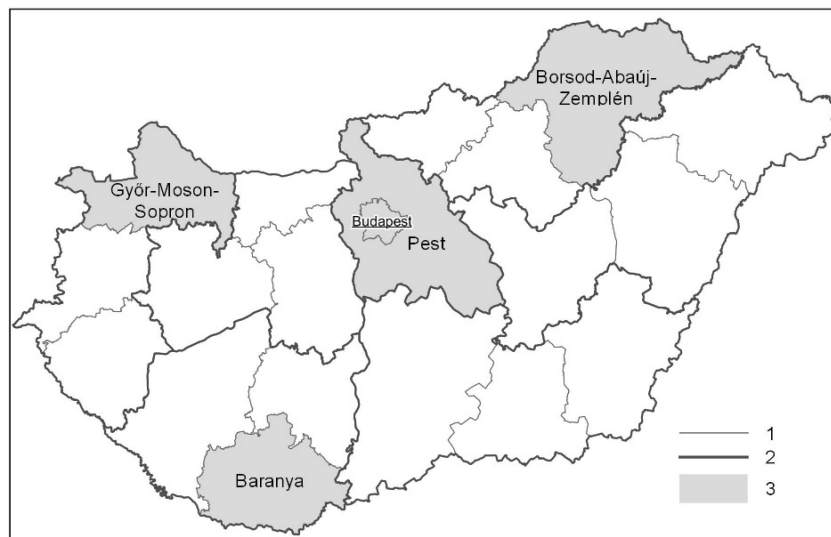
Case study areas in Hungary have been selected generally in NUTS3 basis, however, after a general overview, the investigated areas are smaller territories inside the respective counties. Selected case studies are shown in Table 1, Figure 1 displays their geographical location inside the country.

1. Table: Examples and good practice study in the regions for Hungary.

Regions for case studies		Thematic issues						Convergence objectives
Name	Code	Polycentricity and suburbanization	Peripheries and other specific regions	Cross-border regions	Support for local economy	Transport infrastructure and accessibility	Natural and cultural heritage	
Közép-Magyarország	HU10	Ex/P						R
Baranya	HU231		Ex				Ex	C, E
Győr- Moson- Sopron	HU221			Ex/P				C, E
Borsod-Abaúj Zemplén	HU311				Ex			C, E

*Ex - possible example to study, P – possible good practices to study, all cross-border examples and good practices are treat as one ,C - Convergence, R - Regional competitiveness and employment, E - European territorial cooperation*

6. Figure: Case study regions for Hungary.



Source: CERS HAS, own edition.

Involvement of Közép-Magyarország (Central Hungary), which is composed of two NUTS 3 units, the City of Budapest and Pest County, was an obvious choice, as the capital region of Hungary has an emerging role in spatial planning and territorial governance. Budapest and its area is the only MEGA

type city in Hungary, which has a growing significance beyond national borders. Közép-Magyarország has been a clear winner of spatial development in the past decades, more and more concentrating human and financial resources inside Hungary. Cooperation of various levels of governance will be presented as a good practice as well.

Baranya county, hosting one of the biggest urban agglomerations in the countryside, Pécs, is an excellent example for a region of rich tradition and culture, where peripheral geographic position and lack of investment inflows lead to a lagging position, with constantly worsening relative position among the Hungarian counties. Baranya is presented as an example for two thematic objectives.

Győr-Moson-Sopron county, being another winner of spatial development since the 1990s, is a good example of a rapidly developing region, located in the vicinity of two capitals of neighbouring countries, which could make its cross-border connections viable and witnesses forming of a transnational zone of economic growth. Establishment of cross-border public transport infrastructure will be presented as good practice.

Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county, similarly to Baranya, is a lagging region where restructuring of socialist economic structures could not take ground yet. The world-wide known wine growing area of Tokaj hills has been proclaimed as a priority region, in order to support local economies, however its results are hard to assess yet since changing of old habits takes a longer period of time.

Case studies were based on desk research and involvement of various external stakeholders through interviews and some focus groups. Desk research has been done by internal staff of the CERS HAS having solid background in research of the particular areas. Details on involved persons if found in Annex.

## 2 General characteristics of the regions

### 2.1 Közép-Magyarország (Central Hungary)

The Region “Közép-Magyarország” (Central Hungary – HU10) lies in the central area of the Carpathian Basin, and is bounded by the central hill range, the Great Plain and the River Danube. It has a total area of 6,916 km<sup>2</sup>. It is in a rather favourable geographic position as it is a crossing point of three TEN-T corridors. It is the most populated NUTS2 region of Hungary with 2,993,948 inhabitants (2016), which represents nearly one third (30.5%) of the country’s population. In administrative terms, the region consists of two NUTS3 regions, the City of Budapest (1,759,500 inhabitants) and Pest County (1,234,500 inhabitants). Excluding the capital city there are 187 settlements (local administrative units) in the region, thereof 54 are towns and 133 villages. “Közép-Magyarország” is the most developed NUTS2 Region in Hungary. It is the only region where the per capita GDP is above the EU 28 average (107.3%). In 2015 almost half (47.7%) of the national GDP was generated in this region. As the large companies of the service sector, including real-estate sector, logistics, telecommunication, IT and media are heavily concentrated in the metropolitan area, considering their added value, service branches represent a strikingly high (77.5%) ratio in the region. In 2015 nearly 30% of the employed people were working and more than 53% of students were studying here. The region is characterized by significant regional disparities. The per capita GDP in the region was 158.3% of the national average in 2015, but broken down to NUTS 3, it was 209.8% in Budapest and 84.5% in Pest County. There are also major differences between two parts of Pest County in terms of population density, wealth, development and standard of living. Nearly two-third of the county’s population live and nearly 80% are employed in the Budapest suburban zone that includes 80 settlements. This “belt” could be characterized by similar social indicators as the city of Budapest. The “rest” of Pest County is less developed. Some territories of the county could even be considered as lagging areas. The 23 districts of the City of Budapest are also very different.

Main planning documents relevant for the region are the National Development and Spatial Development Concept (2014), the spatial plan to be developed for the special region in line with the 2004 law and the Competitive Central Hungary Operational Programme (ERDF-ESF) of the EU Cohesion Policy.

## 2.2 Baranya county

Baranya county (HU231) has a territory of 4,429.6 km<sup>2</sup>, with a population of 368 thousand (2016), population density is at 84 people/km<sup>2</sup>. The county has a fragmented settlement structure, based on small villages (about 300 settlements total). In terms of development conditions, the county is characterised by unfavourable tendencies, lagging and stagnating economy and society. Activity ration of the available workforce is slowly increasing (reaching 60%), unemployment is in a slight fall (7.7%), however, in national terms Baranya county belongs to the three weakest performing counties. Problems are strengthened by the fact that its county seat city, Pécs, could not become a dynamic urban pole. Economy of the county is weak. Due to low level of FDI, weaknesses of the domestic SME sector, economic growth is low in national terms, with a growing gap. The number of competitive, well capitalised and fast growing companies is low, in terms of industrial production the county lies at the third lowest position among the counties. As general background poor accessibility conditions, weak internal demand and weaknesses of human resources is to be mentioned. Economic problems are aggravated by demographic problems and segregation. Population of the county has been decreased by 10% in the past decade, depopulation and ageing is a serious threat. Educational institution structure is relatively favourable, compared to some other counties, however structural problems are evident.

Due to the downsizing of industrial capacities in Pécs and Komló the county has got a rural image. The county, with its unique sub-Mediterranean climate, provides excellent conditions for agriculture, therefore development of the food sector is an explicit development aim. Machinery industry, in spite of its important role in employment and its existing potentials, could not become a driving force, that further strengthens downsizing, generating social problems.

In terms of accessibility, in spite of the finalisation of the Pécs–Budapest motorway in 2010, the county is still suffering from isolation. Transport connections to the west are poorly developed, to the East the Danube is a strong border, as on the county's territory only a ferry is crossing the river, all bridges are outside the county (Baja and Batina in Croatia). Border crossings to Croatia are located in an average of 72 km from each other, being the least permeable border of Hungary. Due to war events in the 1990s cross-border economic cooperation has been reduced to minimum. In spite of an upturn since the beginning of the 2000s, railway connections have been step by step closed down, even the long-distance international train Budapest–Sarajevo has been closed in 2012.

Tourism supply of the county is very diversified, rich in natural and cultural heritage, however it could become attractive only in limited number of areas where they could become an economic potential, including Pécs, the Villány-Siklós wine-growing area, Harkány and Orfű.

In terms of spatial planning the county – similarly to the others – has its land-use plan, spatial development concept and development programme. Besides, for Baranya county the Ancient Drava complex development programme is to be mentioned.

### 2.3 Győr-Moson-Sopron county

The county of Győr-Moson-Sopron (HU221) has a territory of 4,208 km<sup>2</sup>, a population of 455,000 (2016). Seat of the county is Győr, being a city of 130,000 people, a developed industrial centre. The county, after Budapest, is considered as the second most developed county in Hungary, having border with two neighbouring countries: Austria and Slovakia. Generally the county is located in a trilateral border area, whose central urban node is Vienna, the rapidly developing Bratislava, which used to be the core area of the Austria-Hungarian Monarchy until the end of the First World War, where important West-East and North-South transport axes meet. The area, due to the proximate location of Vienna and Bratislava, is one of the most dynamically developing areas in Europe. Natural landscapes are not divided by the borders: eastern edge of the Alps enters Hungary, the Fertő-tó (Neusiedler See) is divided by Austria and Hungary, the Danube is a border river between Austria-Slovakia and Hungary-Slovakia as well. Slovakia and Hungary shares a similar lowland landscape which is divided by the Danube. The Danube is divided into several tributaries, forming an inner delta landscape.

Besides joint history large ethnic diversity is a characteristic of the region. German, Hungarian and Slovak population lives as minorities of the other sides of the border, as well as Croats in all three counties in the rural areas.

Cross-border connections are utmost important. Győr-Moson-Sopron is the most used transit area in Hungary, being the earliest and best developed border crossing infrastructure in Hungary. Development disparities generated significant cross-border commuting in this area. After the political changes in the 1990s the first cross-border institutions have been set up here: Euroregion, joint regional development committee etc. During years of the Iron Curtain the border zone was a particularly protected area, therefore natural resources have been relatively well preserved, for instance the Fertő/Neusiedler Lake is in good natural status.

In case of the Hungary-Slovakia border area two important factors should be mentioned: the rapidly developing city of Bratislava is administratively bordering directly with the Hungarian state, generating a specific geographical setting. Since the EU (2004) and Schengen (2007) accession of the two countries there is a significant moving to suburban zones located on the Austrian and Hungarian sides of the border.

Another particularity of the Hungarian-Slovakian border that on the Slovakian side there is a significant number of ethnic Hungarians, in several areas they form the majority of the local population. Due to this reason there is no language barrier for cross-border cooperation, there is a high number of family, friend and business relationships. Here a significant transnational borderland group has been formed, according to Martinez (1994), composed of ethnic Hungarian with Slovak citizenship, thereof many buy properties, study, work and do businesses in Hungary.

Although Győr-Moson-Sopron is part of a developing trilateral border area, cross-border interactions are rather asymmetric: flows concerning business and travel are dominantly from Hungary towards

Austria, while from Austria to Hungary they are much weaker, mostly motivated by lower prices that includes property purchase as well. From Slovakia there is a significant flow towards Hungary, while Hungarian residents visit Slovakia on a much lower frequency.

Spatial planning documents include the county level land-use plan, the county development concept and the development programme.

## **2.4 Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county**

The county of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén (HU311) is located on the northern, north-eastern part of the country, in its north-easternmost area. Its territory is 7,247.23 km<sup>2</sup>, population figure is 660 549 (2016), being one of the biggest and most populous counties. The narrower target area “Tokaj hills” is bordered with Slovakia, on one point with the Ukraine. The target area is considered as a periphery, from all (county, country, EU) point of view. The area is characterised by hills and lower mountains, extending from Sátoraljaújhely, through Tokaj down to Abaújszántó. The river Bodrog separates it from the Hungarian Great Plain. It has a longitudinal extension of 80 km, while its width is only 4 km, total surface amounts to 890 km<sup>2</sup>. Considering soil and water balance conditions, it is located at the northern edge of grape production zone. The analysed area of 70 thousand people has been administratively organised into five districts in 2014 (districts of Gönc, Sárospatak, Sátoraljaújhely, Szerencs, Tokaj). While wine growing heritage – as UNESCO protected world cultural heritage site – appears as an integrating factor, public administration and public service provision creates internal division.

Grape and wine production is to be considered as significant from historical point of view, however its added value has been decreasing, however still significant. The wine growing area produces 300 thousand tonnes of grape annually, however the produced wine of 190 thousand hl is only 8-9% of the national production, even more insignificant on international level. Tokaj wine is not competitive with quantity, but its unique quality due to the “aszú” grape, therefore efforts should be focus on strengthening its image as high-category product.

Out of the 22 wine-growing regions of Hungary, Tokaj hills are the best known, both inside and outside Hungary. In 2014 there were 5500 professional or hobby wine-growers in the area out of the 70 thousand people, i.e. most of the families are somewhat involved in the production process. Average land size was more than 1 ha in 2014, concentration is still ongoing.

In terms of spatial planning, beside the compulsory county level documents (land-use plan, spatial development concept, development programme), the Tokaj Hill supposed to have its own development concept, as priority region, adopted as an act by the Parliament.

### 3 General overview of thematic issues in country

2. Table: Relevance of the investigated thematic issues in Hungary.

Thematic issues	National		Regional		Local	
	Level of importance	Impact of the cohesion policy	Level of importance	Impact of the cohesion policy	Level of importance	Impact of the cohesion policy
Polycentricity and suburbanization	3	1	2	1	1	1
Peripheries and other specific regions	2	2	3	2	2	1
Cross-border regions	2	2	3	2	1	1
Support for local economy	1	2	2	2	2	2
Transport infrastructure and accessibility	3	3	2	2	1	1
Natural and cultural heritage	1	1	3	1	2	1

#### 3.1 Polycentricity and suburbanization

The first signs of a starting suburbanization process in Hungary arose in the late 1980s in Budapest region. After 1990s as a consequence of the transition to market economy, the liberalization of the property market and the new local governmental system, a radical territorial realignment has started. Regarding urban development the last 25 years could be characterized as a multifaceted process. On one hand classical urbanization, namely the concentration of the population and the economic activities to urban spaces, has continued. The number of towns and cities intensively increased at national level. While population of the country decreased, Közép-Magyarország, and particularly the suburban zone of Budapest, had a steady surplus. As consequence, weight of the central region has slightly increased within the country. Intensifying labour relations between Budapest and its hinterland, due to suburbanization and the growing population weight of the city-region, implied that the overall role of Budapest and its metropolitan region within the country's labour mobility flows also increased. At the same time population of nearly all Hungarian cities/towns dwindled because of general population decrease, in some cases, because of suburbanization. Only exceptions were towns situated in the Budapest agglomeration or in North-Western Hungary. The larger cities (of around 150-200,000 inhabitants) following Budapest in the city hierarchy did not have appropriate city functions, and could not become real regional centres and mobilize their surroundings.

The National Spatial Development Concept (2005) aimed to promote a territorially more balanced, polycentric development defined six development poles. A special programme ("Pólus Program") was incorporated into the National Strategic Reference Framework of Hungary (2007–2013) for achieving these goals but finally this program had not been carried out. The National Development and Spatial Development Concept in 2014 set again the goal of polycentric city network and balanced territorial structure but without a clear definition of the intended settlement structure or planned interventions. ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report



Currently a special governmental programme “Programme for Modern Cities” and one priority axis of the Territorial and Settlement Development Operational Programme concentrates on county seats (18 cities) and further five “cities with county rank”.

Another side of urban development in Hungary after the 1990s was the acceleration of suburbanization processes, mainly in the metropolitan area of Budapest. Public policies – like elimination of national economic and spatial planning practice, the increased autonomy of highly fragmented local governments, public utility investments, taxation policy allocating local governments a major part of the personal income tax revenues – resulted an uncontrolled process of suburbanization. The regulatory environment created incentives for suburban municipalities to adopt policies aimed at attracting middle- and higher income households. The City of Budapest itself decreased by nearly 300 thousand residents in twenty years period – from a little over 2 million in 1990 to 1.7 million in 2011. In the suburban zone, on the other hand, a slight natural decrease in population was offset by a massive inflow of people moving away from the urban core and from the less developed regions of the country. As a consequence, since 1990 the size of the population in the suburban zone grew by 44 percent, i.e. 800,000 residents by 2011.

The main wave of decentralization of service functions and industry in the metropolitan periphery started in the late 1990s. It was fuelled primarily by the establishment of new industries and businesses, usually with foreign investment, which showed a clear preference to suburban locations. These functions were attracted mostly to major transport corridors and hubs in the metropolitan periphery. Newly erected shopping centres, business parks, logistic plants were typically developed on greenfield sites, generating a rapid expansion of suburban enterprise zones. The massive dispersal of urban activities in the form of sprawl was swiftly displacing the advantages of the compact urban form inherited from the socialist era. After 2000 suburbanization spread to other large and medium sized Hungarian cities as well (Szeged, Győr, Kecskemét, Nyíregyháza, Debrecen, Zalaegerszeg, Kaposvár etc.).

The financial and economic crisis in 2008 significantly slowed down the process of suburbanization. General population decreasing trend in Budapest was gradually reversed, and since 2009 the capital restarted to have a migration surplus. Net population decline in other cities was also reduced. Some cities (Győr, Kecskemét, Sopron, Szeged) even gained a slight surplus, however it is mainly due to the immigration from other – less developed – regions of the country. The non-residential suburbanization has not slowed down noticeably because of EU-financed transport infrastructure development. Secondly, expansion of retail plants has been slowing down and industrial and logistic plants have become the main forms of new green-field constructions. Local governments have also changed their strategy.

In short, the urban sprawl has become a typical form of metropolitan growth in Hungary after the 1990s. Without any partnership, coordination and planning, this process has led to transport, environmental, economic and financial conflicts. The national and regional planning documents referred to the negative effects of the uncontrolled suburbanization but in reality very few public

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interventions happened. The fragmented administrative structure of the country and the uncoordinated system of land development controls did not help to take path of a more balanced territorial development. Regarding urban sprawl the only positive development was the adoption of new acts on spatial planning in two priority regions, namely the Lake Balaton region (2000) and Budapest Agglomeration (2005), aiming at regulation of local governments' liberal land use and planning practice, primarily focusing on protection of the environment. Planning documents for EU Cohesion Policy – either in the previous or current programming period – concentrated on convergence and practically neglected the special conflicts caused by the suburbanization process. These priority regions have never appeared in EU planning documents, as „sectoral” logic prevailed, even the current Territorial and Settlement Development Operational Programme starkly separates the county seats from their surroundings by setting up special priority axes for the counties and for cities having county rights.

### **3.2 Peripheries and other specific regions**

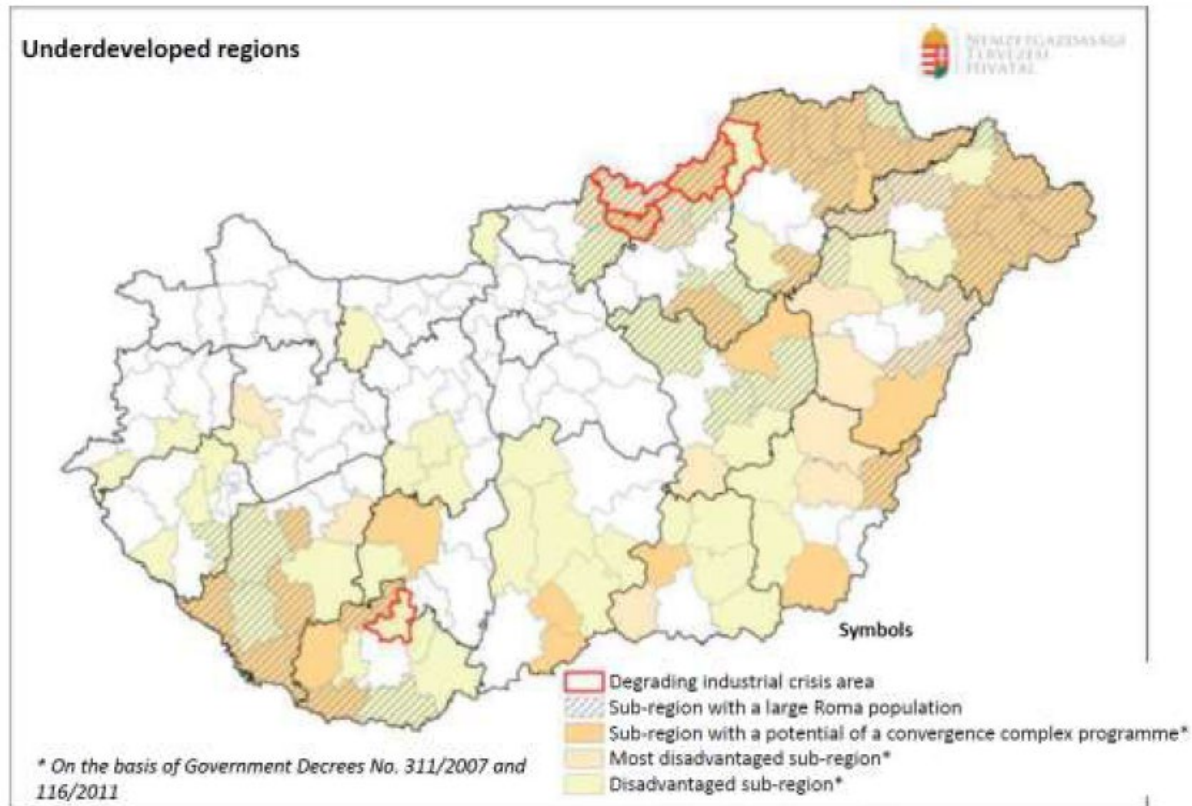
Dealing with the revitalisation of peripheries is a constant issue of spatial planning and regional development in Hungary. Hungarian regional policy, being a unitary and centralised country, has dominantly been the task of the national economic and social policy.

The urban network of Hungary lacks the “typical” second-tier regional centre cities that are usually responsible for organising the peripheries. Regional centres in Hungary have a population between 100,000 and 200,000 that are not strong enough to spill over their economic power to a wider area, especially rural lagging regions. Transport infrastructure in Hungary is organised in a radial structure, the only transport node being the capital of Budapest. This generates several peripheral areas between the transport axes and along the state borders whose permeability is very various, often running along natural waterflows (the Danube and Ipoly/Ipeľ with Slovakia, the Drava and Mura with Croatia and the Tisza with the Ukraine). Peripheral regions usually suffer – beside accessibility problems – with unfavourable educational structure, low level of employment, high level of unemployment (however introduction of public works on all levels made unemployment drastically shrinking in the recent years), low level of income and various social challenges. Rural areas are usually agriculture-oriented, characterised by depopulation tendencies. Depopulation in these rural areas often results appearance of non-regulated dwellings on the outskirts of nearby larger urban centres, as selling of low-priced rural properties don't allow proper housing in nearby towns or cities that generate conflict in spatial planning of urban areas.

In regional terms, besides Central Hungary (Budapest and agglomeration) only Western Transdanubia (the counties of Győr-Moson-Sopron and Vas) and Central Transdanubia (Fejér county) have a positive migration saldo, while large cities of Debrecen and Szeged have relatively favourable position, all the rest (including Baranya and the entire South Transdanubia) are considered peripheral regions. In peripheral regions poverty has generated low level of trust and social solidarity. According to the National Development and Spatial Development Concept (2014) Hungary is one of ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

the EU countries with the largest regional disparities, 53% of the micro regions are belonging to disadvantageous micro regions that make up 57.2% of the country's territory. Beside traditional peripheries – border areas and rural areas – new internal peripheries have been appeared in the past decade in counties with medium-level of development.

7. Figure: Lagging regions in Hungary.



Source: *National Development and Spatial Development Concept*, p. 156.

[https://regionalispolitika.kormany.hu/download/b/c9/e0000/OFTK\\_vegleges\\_EN.pdf](https://regionalispolitika.kormany.hu/download/b/c9/e0000/OFTK_vegleges_EN.pdf) (16/10/2017).

### 3.3 Cross-border regions

Cross-border regions are very various in Hungary. As they are dominantly peripheral regions, their connectivity and the border's permeability are of key importance. A large share of Hungary's borders run along natural waterflows that pose a specific challenge to ensure accessibility and ease the isolated position.

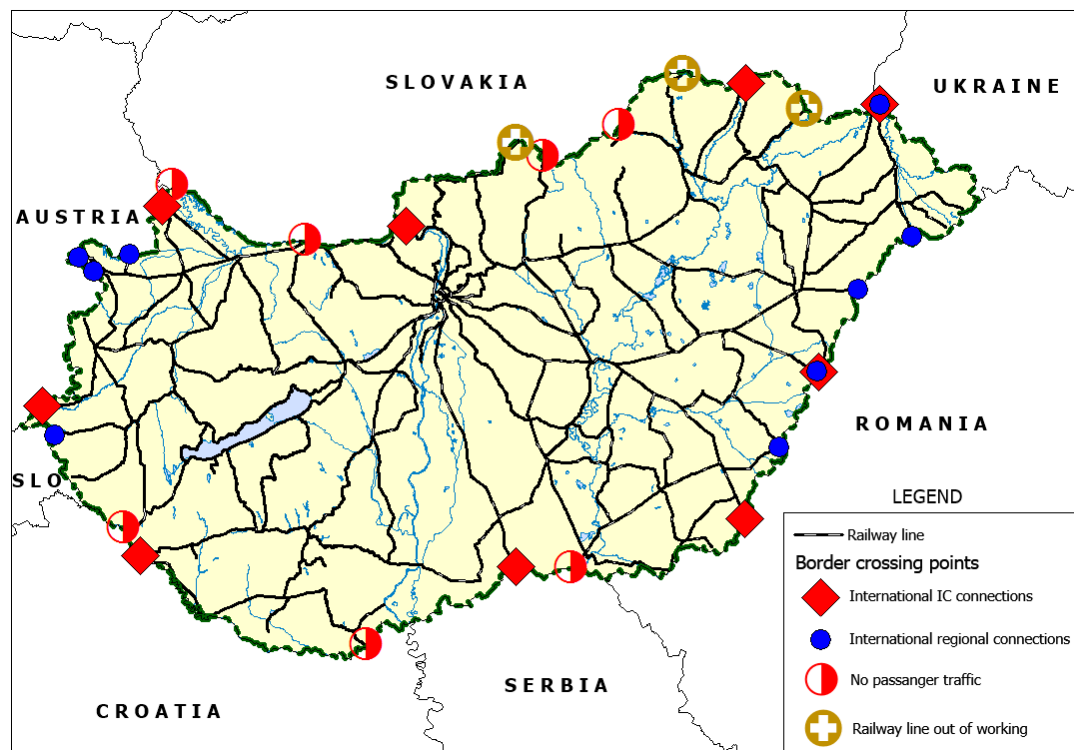
Borders with Schengen Zone countries form a separate group where there is no border control since 2007 (with the exception of some cases in relation to Austria) and the border is possible to be crossed everywhere. Between Hungary-Romania and Hungary-Croatia control is limited to personal documents (passports) as both are EU member states. The border to Serbia and Ukraine is an external Schengen border, with passport and duty controls. In the latter cases waiting times may be long that complicates scheduled services.

From cross-border railway transport point of view only long-distance international railway connections have remained, side railway lines originally serving regional traffic have been closed or temporarily suspended. In case of long-distance connections regional accessibility is difficult, timetables are awkwardly designed and are frequently changing. Remaining regional train connections operate to Slovenia, Ukraine, Romania and Austria. Out of these only the Austrian connection is satisfactory, other connections are very inefficient (e.g. between Debrecen and Oradea with a journey time of three hours for 75 km).

The Austria-Hungary connection may be considered as a developed one, where traffic is operated by the joint Hungarian-Austrian railway company GYSEV. Regional service is operating also on the relation of Győr–Vienna, operated by ÖBB and the Hungarian State Railways (MÁV). These lines have been opened for pilot purposes after the EU accession (Euroregional trains), with high quality rolling stock, however their number has been decreased in the recent years. On the Hungary-Slovakia border, apart from the international connection Budapest–Bratislava through Szob, regional traffic is not working: trains only go the border, even if the infrastructure is available.

Regional services have been ceased also in terms of bus transport, with the exception of some recently started pilot services. International bus transport is centralised in Budapest, dominated by long-distance services, but not proper for regional connectivity. Exceptions can be found in Romania where privatised service providers launch small buses from Budapest. Another example is Ukraine, whose small towns in the border area are inaccessible by public transport.

8. Figure: Railway border crossings in Hungary.



Source: CERS HAS, own edition.

### **3.4 Support for local economy**

Providing support to local economies has always been a tool of regional policy in Hungary, however, due to lacking regionalisation, in these policies top-down approach has been the dominating. EU Cohesion Policy provided several options to promote local economies through subsidies to public bodies for setting up business infrastructure, direct incentives to SMEs, funding to energy-efficiency measures increasing competitiveness, fostering cooperation among SMEs (clusterisation) and approaching foreign markets (internationalisation). Implementation of such policy measures may become a challenge in lagging regions with unfavourable demographic trends, educational structure and social conflicts, as it is typical in most of Hungary's peripheral regions.

The 2014 National Development and Spatial Development Concept sets out, inter alia, under its middle-term (2014-2020) objectives to establish “patriotic economy on basis of middle-sized enterprises” and “territorial integration, area-based and local developments on basis of local economy”. From competitiveness point of view cooperation between actors of local economy is of key importance as entrepreneurial trust is a basis for competitive economy. Strengthening of local economy is often interpreted as substitution of the reliance on foreign direct investment, regaining of local markets by local companies which might lead to the revitalisation of peripheral regions, therefore agriculture and food industry were put into focus through development of the food chain, involvement of local producers, diversification of the economy of the countryside, strengthening of SMEs.

In order to reach these objectives national economic policy measures and Cohesion Policy instruments have been applied. National policy measures included the extension of the “priority tourism development areas”. This category includes areas where tourism development has its potentials and cooperation of the local economic actors should be strengthened by state measures. These areas are the Balaton, the Sopron-Fertő area and the “Tokaj – Felső-Tisza – Nyírség” area where development programmes have been created and special incentives are available, including Cohesion Policy funding. In case of Tokaj area the special status has been highlighted through becoming a “priority region” (besides the Balaton) by the Regional and Spatial Development Act. This implies its spatial plan is adopted by the Parliament as an act and special institutions are set up with state coordination for development of the area.

### **3.5 Transport infrastructure and accessibility**

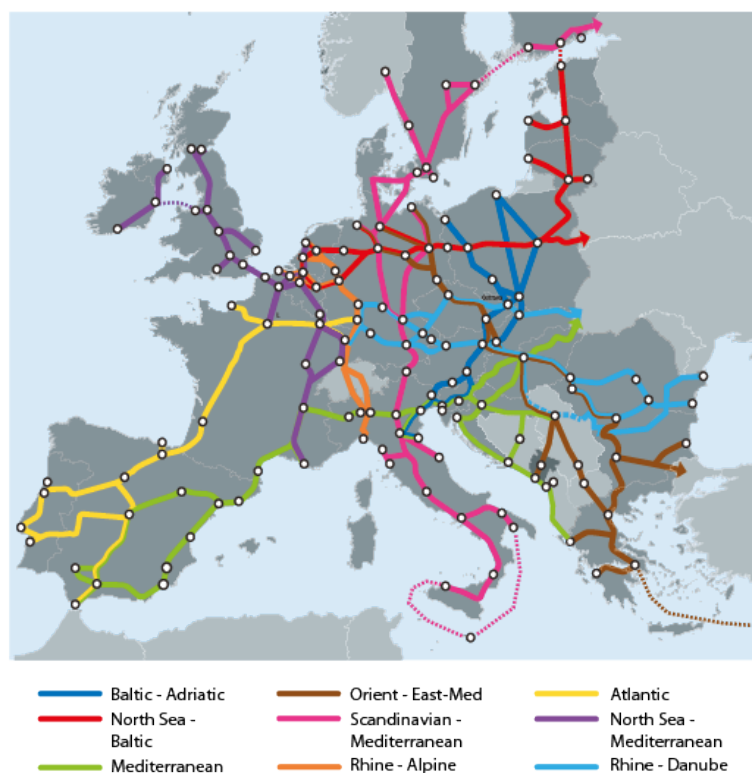
Hungary is crossed by several TEN-T corridors, whose meet in the area of Budapest which has become a key transport node in European terms. The corridors Rhine-Danube (Corridor X: Vienna–Budapest–Szeged–Belgrade) and Orient-East Med (Corridor IV: Budapest–Arad–Bucharest) is the most important transport axis which is the main communication line between Western Europe and the Balkan countries. The Mediterranean Corridor (Corridor V: Koper–Ljubljana–Budapest–Kiev, V/b: Rijeka–Zagreb–Budapest) is of similar importance. It plays a key role in accessing the ports at the Adriatic, however accessibility towards the Ukraine and Russia has lost its potential due to recent political and military events in the Ukraine.

The railway connection Vienna–Budapest is the most competitive one in terms of substructure and rolling stock. The Budapest–Szeged (–Belgrade) connection is under revitalisation through cooperation project of Hungary–Serbia and the Peoples’ Republic of China, aiming to become the main transport axis between the Far East and Central Europe. As for Corridor V accessibility of the Adriatic ports are of key importance, thereof Koper is having an increasing role. There is a Hungarian participation in the development of the port facilities, however railway infrastructure on the Hungarian side (Bajánsenye–Zalaegerszeg–Veszprém–Budapest) looks for further investment.

9. Figure: Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T).

### Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T)

Ten-T Core Network and Corridors



Source: CaixaBank Research, based on data from the European Commission.

Source: <http://www.caixabankresearch.com/en/infrastructure-european-union-and-juncker-plan> (16/10/2017).

Even if TEN-T corridors have been defined as backbone of the national infrastructure network as well, development funding often prefers railway infrastructure elements being more important from national point of view instead of TEN-T ones. Under this category the Budapest–Szolnok–Debrecen railway line has been enhanced instead of the one through Miskolc, just like the Budapest–Székesfehérvár–Siófok–Nagykanizsa line instead of the TEN-T element through Dombóvár–Kaposvár.

Motorway network has been rapidly extending in the past 20 years, in line with the TEN-T network, mostly reaching or approaching the state borders. While West-East connections have been clearly preferred, North-South connections have been dominantly neglected, resulting areas located at important traffic nodes suffering from freight transit (Western Hungary) or becoming more isolated due

to delay of investments and diverting of flow of goods to other better developed routes (South Transdanubia). The government has set the aim to all motorways to reach the state borders (e.g. the M30 in the area of Tokaj) and provide speedway (“motorway-light”) accessibility to all county seats until 2030.

### **3.6 Natural and cultural heritage**

The National Land-use Plan (OTrT) defines the protected areas, including the NATURA 2000 sites. Natural heritage protection in Hungary has been traditionally strict, with long and complicated procedures before awarding building rights. This system has been drastically changed, resulting a faster but more centralised system which, on the other hand, weakened the role of heritage protection, both in natural and cultural terms.

In case of protected areas detailed environmental assessment is still needed, however in case of non-affected building sites permission process has been significantly speeded up.

In case of cultural heritage protection previous regulation proved to be more effective from protection point of view. Monuments were classified as nationally and locally protected, including a wider approach, protecting a wider area of a monument (e.g. street view, nearby buildings). Previous categorisation is not in use anymore: only national protection exists, local regulations have ceased protection categories that resulted the disappearing of some local values through new developments with modern design and technology, not considering local/regional characteristics, as fines are not applicable anymore.

Key actors in protection are the national parks (nature protection), the National Cultural Fund and Lechner Knowledge Centre (cultural heritage protection). The National Cultural Fund provides financial support to protection of local values as well, however with very limited funding. As locally protected buildings are not registered anymore, usually nationally protected objects are renovated through that. Sacral heritage has been a priority: a large number of churches have been renovated in rural areas in the past years.

In Hungary several areas are protected as UNESCO World Heritage, including the following sites in the case-study regions:

- Budapest including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrásy avenue (1987, 2002);
- Tokaj Wine Region Historic Cultural Landscape (2002);
- Fertő/Neusiedlersee Cultural Landscape (2001) – in Győr-Moson-Sopron county;
- Early Christian Necropolis of Pécs (2000) and the Busó festivities at Mohács: masked end-of-winter carnival custom (2009) in Baranya county.

## **4 Polycentricity and suburbanisation in Central Hungary**

### **4.1 Thematic issues problems**

Urban sprawl has become one of the most significant phenomena characterising the development of the Hungarian capital and its region in the past 25 years. The decade of the 1990s could be considered as the peak of residential suburbanization, as the city lost a significant proportion of its population. Residential suburbanization affected mainly settlements located in the more environmentally attractive areas to the north and west of Budapest. Besides the wealthier ones, a less numerous yet substantial segment of households moving out of the city was comprised of those lower income families that had become unable to bear the costs of housing and services in the city and opted to relocate to cheaper suburban communities. Since 2000 the intensity of residential suburbanization has decreased gradually giving way to an accelerated deconcentration of retail and industrial activities. These functions have been attracted mostly to the major transport corridors and hubs in the metropolitan periphery. Both residential suburbanization and the decentralization of business activities mainly affected the “official” suburban zone of Budapest (Budapest and 80 settlements), but in the last decade they have expanded beyond the borders of this area, moreover, mainly along the main transport corridors, even beyond the borders of Pest County.

The recent years could be characterised by a twofold process. Deconcentration of people and economic activities is still going on, there is a parallel process of revitalization of the inner periphery of Budapest (“hidden” suburbanization”). On the other hand, there are incomers mainly from other cities of the country but there are also families and young people moving back to the city from the suburban zone. Data indicate that Budapest has already passed the peak of the suburbanization, and slowly entering the stage of re-urbanization.

As an outcome of suburbanisation the spatial pattern of population and economic activities within Budapest’s urban region has significantly changed. Residential suburbanisation and the decentralisation of business activities have led to a rearrangement of the commuting flows, resulting environmental damages, disappearance of the green belt, increase of traffic congestions, social tensions, growing regional disparities. The territory of the region has become highly fragmented and the settlement structure does not indicate a polycentric pattern. The vicinity of Budapest has prevented the development of small and medium-sized towns in the metropolitan region. Neither Érd, the only town having a population of over 50,000 and status of city with county rights, fulfil the functions of a regional centre. The majority of the other small towns are also deficient in several functions.



## **4.2 Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

EU cohesion policy has had a significant impact on spatial planning and territorial governance in Hungary due to the fact that the absorption of EU subsidies has become one of the most important political ambitions. However, management of the Structural Funds has been a considerable challenge since traditional government structures and practices have not been typically harmonised with the EU principles. The most robust influence of the Cohesion Policy on national structures could be observed in the preparation period when Hungary tried to build up an institutional and spatial planning framework suitable for absorption of EU Funds. After the accession the urge for constructing regional institutions and local partnerships has diminished and a vigorous centralisation process has started creating a model of predominantly formal compliance with EU norms. The management of EU funds has always followed a centralised bureaucratic model and the allocation of EU funds has been mostly based on sectoral logic. The resource-oriented, EU-conform planning activity conducted by the central governmental organs have got priority and the traditional types of national plans (planning tools mainly constructed in the pre-accession period) have been eroded.

After a robust reorganisation of the institutional framework for development planning, coordination and management of development activities around the millennium institutions have been created based on the partnership principle on different territorial levels (regional and county development councils, their development agencies, inter municipal entities) that have not got significant role in the development practice. Finally, in 2014 their operation has been terminated by law. The representation of territorial interests and the territorial identity has been absent from the Hungarian practice, which hindered the elaboration of effective regional programmes.

The Hungarian practice has been also lacking the creation and execution of complex programmes. Although functional regions have enjoyed special attention in national planning documents, they have never appeared in EU planning documents. Although the new planning tool of integrated urban (settlement) development strategies has been a step towards a more harmonised development on settlement level, its effect has been somewhat negative as it promoted thinking within the city borders.

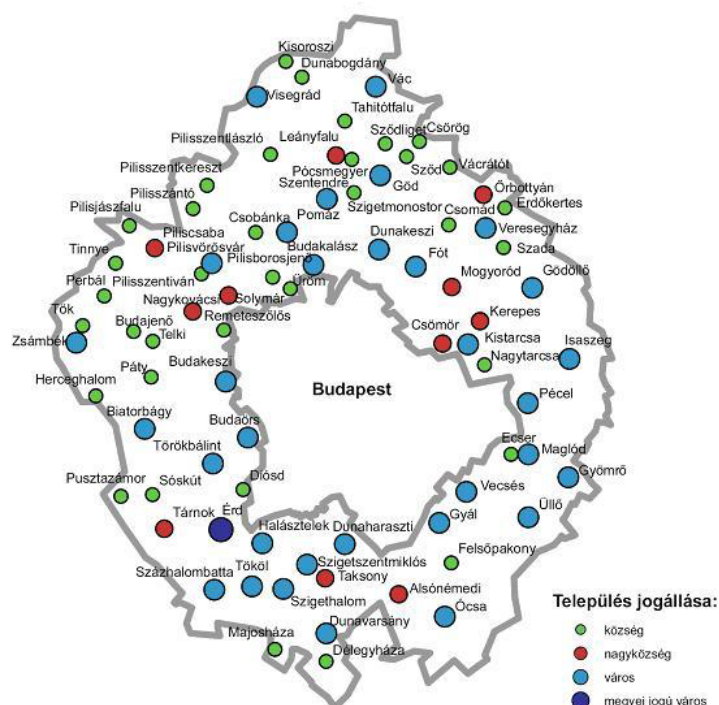
As the fragmented local governmental structure has not been changed, municipalities have remained “strong” actors in national spatial planning, however, due to the centralisation process of the 2010s, their autonomy and service provider role has been significantly weakened. The local-territorial self-governments tended to focus more on their own projects within their own administrative borders, instead of a wider area-based approach.

These general findings are also valid in the case of “Közép-Magyarország” region but with some specialities. First of all, since Budapest is the capital, the role of the national government in planning and management is even stronger than in the case of other regions. Due to its relative high per capita GDP value, since 2007 the region is subject to Objective 2 “Regional competitiveness and employment”, while until 2006 it belonged to Objective 1, “phasing in”. ERDF funding available for the region are planned and realised within a single operational programme, which includes both sectoral ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

and regional priorities. This situation has given even more chance for the bodies of the central government to determine the content and the implementation of the regional OP. Moreover, several so called priority projects based on governmental decisions have been carried out in the region and sometimes have directly influenced the land use plans of the city.

Regarding land use planning the central level has also got a much more important role. By 2005, when the negative effects of urban sprawl became evident, the state legislative body was under political pressure to adopt a new Act on Spatial Planning in the Agglomeration of Budapest. It contains a structural plan and a zoning plan for the whole territory of the suburban region, and the local governments (Budapest and other 80 municipalities) are obligated to follow the regulation while creating their own land use plans. The real impact of this law on long-term development has happened to be marginal. The law has been revised in 2011, the trends are towards clear relaxation. Since until 2011 Budapest Agglomeration has been a priority region by law, elaboration of the development concept and programme for the suburban region has been an obligatory task for the Development Council of the Budapest Agglomeration operating from 1997 to 1999 and from 2005 to 2011. The approval of these planning documents has been the competence of the National Government. Although the first Development Council accepted a long-term concept and strategic plan in 1999 and the new council also developed a middle term concept and programme in 2005, these documents have never become official plans since the government did not even put them on the agenda.

10. Figure: Public administrative units of the Budapest agglomeration (legend top-down: municipalities – large municipalities – towns – cities with county right)



Source: <http://www.terport.hu/kiemelt-tersegek/budapesti-agglomeracio> (16/10/2017).

Administrative structure is also a peculiarity of this region. It consists of two second-tier administrative units (NUTS3 level) governed by local governments of Pest County and the City of Budapest. There are 187 municipalities in the county (40 of them having city or town rank). As Hungary is a unitary state the position of the second tier of local governments has always tended to be relatively weak, politically and financially controlled by the central government. Since 2012 these governments have been weakened significantly and are responsible merely for coordinative tasks in regional and rural development. Budapest, the capital has a special status, providing both municipal and county functions and having a peculiar dual self-government system. This means that in addition to the Local Government of Budapest, each of the twenty-three districts (kerület) have their own local government, with elected mayors and a body of representatives. The General Assembly of Budapest and the district bodies of representatives are equal in terms of their basic rights, with no hierarchic relationship between them. A division of labour has emerged among the autonomous and equal local governments which are in line with duties and responsibilities. Local government tasks are generally implemented by the districts while tasks stemming from its nationwide scope and the city as a whole are undertaken by the Local Government of Budapest. Capital and county government offices – local offices of the government – also contribute to the elaboration and territorial implementation of certain sectoral strategies and have the competence for checking the conformity of the land use plans with higher level plans and have tasks of building regulation control.

Pest County has similar tasks as other counties: elaboration of the county development concepts and programmes (approved in 2003 and 2013) and coordination of regional development. On LAU2 level municipalities create their urban (settlement) development documents on voluntary basis. Cities and towns in the county usually have their own long-term concepts and middle-term programmes, including the integrated urban (settlement) development strategies.

The Local Government of Budapest has the duty and right to elaborate the settlement development concept and plan for the whole territory of the city. In the period of 2000-2017 the Local Government of Budapest approved two long-term “settlement” level urban development concepts in 2003 and in 2014 (called “Budapest 2030”). In harmony with the goals of “Budapest 2030” an integrated urban strategy was also adopted (called “Budapest 2020”) in 2015 setting up the city’s mid-term development priorities. The districts of the city also develop their development concepts and integrated strategies, sometimes not entirely in line with the planning documents of the City of Budapest. Since 2011 the city government is also obliged to create the “territorial” development planning documents (similar to county development concepts and programs) focusing on territorial functions and relations. These “territorial type” documents principally served the preparation for the 2014-2020 EU programming period. The development concept, the development programme and four thematic development programmes (hereinafter TDP) were approved in 2014. The TDPs are strategic documents with an entirely new perspective aiming at harmonising development projects with respect to their subjects – such as development of Danube riverside, development of brownfield areas, social urban regeneration and promotion economic development and job creation.

Regarding the land use planning system Pest County has got a special situation in comparison with other counties. It approves a land use plan in conform with national plans, but only for the territory out of the Budapest Agglomeration zone. Budapest itself had a two-tier land use planning system till 2012. The Local Government of Budapest approved the structural plan for the whole city, the framework for zoning plans and the framework for building regulations of the districts. It was compulsory for the districts to follow this regulation while creating their more detailed land use plans. Since 2012 Budapest has got less power and is merely entitled to develop a structural plan according to the main city-level development goals, and to approve a building regulation for some elements having a city-wide importance (territories for city-level infrastructure, limitation of the building's altitude in some parts of the city etc.). The city government has got the authority to regulate some special parts of Budapest, like the Danube riverside and the City Park.

Territorial framework for cohesion policy is the NUTS2 region, which is quite different from the administrative and spatial planning system. The firstly established regional development body was the Budapest Agglomeration Development Council (BAFT), but it operated only for two years. The amendment of the Regional and Spatial Development Act in December 1999 eliminated this organization in line with the creation of the Regional Development Council of the "Közép-Magyarország" region. Regional actors, like City of Budapest, Pest County, micro regions, city districts were represented in this council but the representatives of central government were in majority. The regional agency (ProRegio) was established by this council that became the main actor in coordinating the different actors in the planning process of the separate regional OP for the period of 2007-2013 and played an important role in the EU fund management in that period.

Being an Objective 2 region, subsidies per capita have gradually decreased, and by the 2014-2020 period have been minimised. Budapest, being a strong actor in the region having its own capacity for developing its own projects or involving private capital, is less dependent on Structural Funds. Pest County, having underdeveloped parts out of the suburban zone, is in a much worse situation. Because of the low level of available funds the county has decided to split from Budapest. This initiative has been supported by the national government and from 2021 Pest County and Budapest will form separate NUTS2 regions. There is a fear that the even stronger borders between the Capital and its surroundings will hamper fighting against the negative effects of the uncontrolled suburbanization.

According the judgement of the focus group members, although almost all national or regional level spatial plans have set up the common goals of promoting polycentric and balanced territorial development and preserving compact cities, land use regulation and development activities in the region have not really assisted the realisation of these objectives. Investors have several times affected the determination of land-use plans, while in state regulation release of restrictions was also a general tendency. The regional governments (Pest county and Budapest city) feel they are losing their tools to prevent urban sprawl.

Cohesion policy has not had an overall positive impact on the region. Merely few interventions financed by EU funds have assisted to a more balanced development, such as the development of the suburban railway and P+R system, rehabilitation of the city centres or social urban regeneration programmes. Generally, projects have not followed a clear regional concept and have been implemented in a disorganised manner creating “development islands”. Development activities of local governments have not been coordinated; moreover, their typical attitude could be characterised as a “struggle for development resources”, frequently in the political field. The competition for getting funded weakened cooperation both in the public and the private sector. The project-based planning and implementation practice and the bureaucratic procedures often set back the local creativity and innovation. There have been attempts to create institutions of territorial “governance” (formally development councils and inter-municipal co-operations on “small region” level, nowadays partnership agreements in some territorial sectors of the region) but lacking real competencies and resources they could not become strong actors of the territorial development.

It seems that spontaneous flows such as re-urbanisation and economic factors such as the rising cost of energy or increasing weight of economic sectors with lower land-use have had power to re-direct development toward a more sustainable model.

### **4.3 Recommendation**

In Közép-Magyarország the fragmented administrative and land-use planning structure, the lack of multi-level and geographically flexible governance are the main barriers of polycentric and balanced development. Unfortunately, EU cohesion policy has not contributed to a more balanced and “place-based” development in this region since allocation of EU funds has affirmed the centralized bureaucratic model based mainly on sectoral logic and has not been sensitive to inter-regional differences. On one hand spatial planning and regional development are over-centralized (frequently politically influenced), on the other hand land-use regulation and concrete local development activities are over-decentralized.

Recommendations concerning the thematic issue and present opportunities to improve the system are the following:

- As Közép-Magyarország will split into two separate NUT2 regions, there is an urgent need to create institutions for the coordination of planning and development activities on level of the functional urban area, mainly covering the Budapest Agglomeration.
- If institutions are lacking, bottom-up cooperation would be needed. State incentives are also welcome.
- Integrated development plans and thematic development plans have proved to be efficient tools on local level. It would be a good idea to extend this practice to regional level.
- Strengthening the implementation of spatial policies and plans and to be more strict on land use regulation.
- Spatial planning exercise must rely on partnership and cooperation, similar to the practice of clusters.

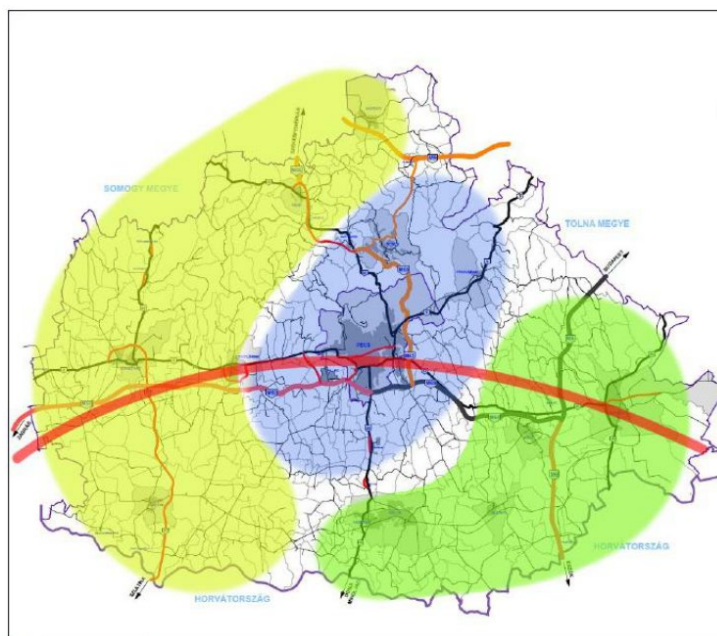
## 5 Peripheries and other specific regions in Baranya county

### 5.1 Thematic issues problems

Baranya county, located on the South of Hungary, suffers from structural problems since the early 1990s. Comparing to the 1950s the Hungary-Yugoslavia border was part of the Iron Curtain, the melting of the Soviet-Yugoslav relationship and the uprising of socialist industry in the area generated relatively favourable economic situation. Later in the 1990s wars in Yugoslavia put the county into an unfavourable situation: foreign direct investment avoided the area, national infrastructure development projects have also been postponed. Even if the city of Pécs has been the 5<sup>th</sup> largest urban centre in Hungary the failure of economic restructuring ended in a relative – sometimes absolute – downturn in the region's economy.

Although the county as a whole is considered as a periphery, its internal structure is a pattern of relatively developed (Pécs, Mohács–Bóly, Villány area) areas and peripheries which count to the most undeveloped areas on national level. The Western part of the country (Szigetvár area), the Ormánság (Sellye area – along the border with Croatia) and the Hegyhát (Sásd area) is treated as lagging areas requiring complex economy and social development measures.

11. Figure: Strategic space structure of Baranya county.



Source: *Baranya County Spatial Development Concept, 2014, p. 52.*

#### Legend:

- light green** – lagging areas in West-Baranya requiring complex development measures;
- blue** – Pécs and agglomeration under economic restructuring;
- dark green** - local development based on comparative advantages;
- red line** - improvement of cross-border cooperation.

## 5.2 Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice

Previous development document for Baranya county was adopted in 2005, which has been replaced by the county's development concept in 2014, in line with the amended Regional and Spatial Development Act.

The actual development concept of Baranya county sets out three territorial objectives, focusing on particular parts of the county:

- Complex development of lagging areas needing complex development measures. These are the target area of the Ancient Drava Programme, West-Baranya (Szigetvár area) and North Baranya (Sásd area). These areas are facing serious economic downturn and peripherisation that is to be managed with complex programmes, similar to the Ancient Drava, in order to promote self-sustainable agriculture, local products and strengthening of local communities.
- The Pécs agglomeration, including the town of Komló must undergo economic regeneration which is still suffering from the closure of coal mining and socialist industry. Development of machinery is of key importance.
- The southwest of Baranya, including the axes Bóly–Mohács and Villány–Siklós–Harkány are having stronger economic potentials with competitive actors in agriculture and food industry. Here logistics must be developed.
- As a horizontal territorial objective: cross-border cooperation with Croatia must be strengthened, including deepening economic cooperation and improvement of transport infrastructure.

The county concept is the basis of the Integrated Territorial Programme (ITP) for Baranya county, which is sharing some similarities with the Integrated Territorial Investment of the Cohesion Fund, however lacking its governance and decision-making component, instead it relies on strong central coordination and involvement of the county in the implementation. The Baranya county ITP amounts to 38.02 billion HUF (approx. 122.63 million EUR)

Prior to development of the actual concept, as an alternative development concept has been elaborated by enthusiast experts called the "Ancient Drava", targeting the South-West of the county, the so-called Ormánság (Sellye area), aiming at the complete revitalisation of the local landscape, economy and society. The Ormánság has always been a peripheral area that has been always isolated along the non-permeable southern border, the Drava river. As land quality has been relatively poor and capital investments have usually avoided the area, it has always been a source of out-migration and depopulation. The original Ancient Drava programme set the following objectives:

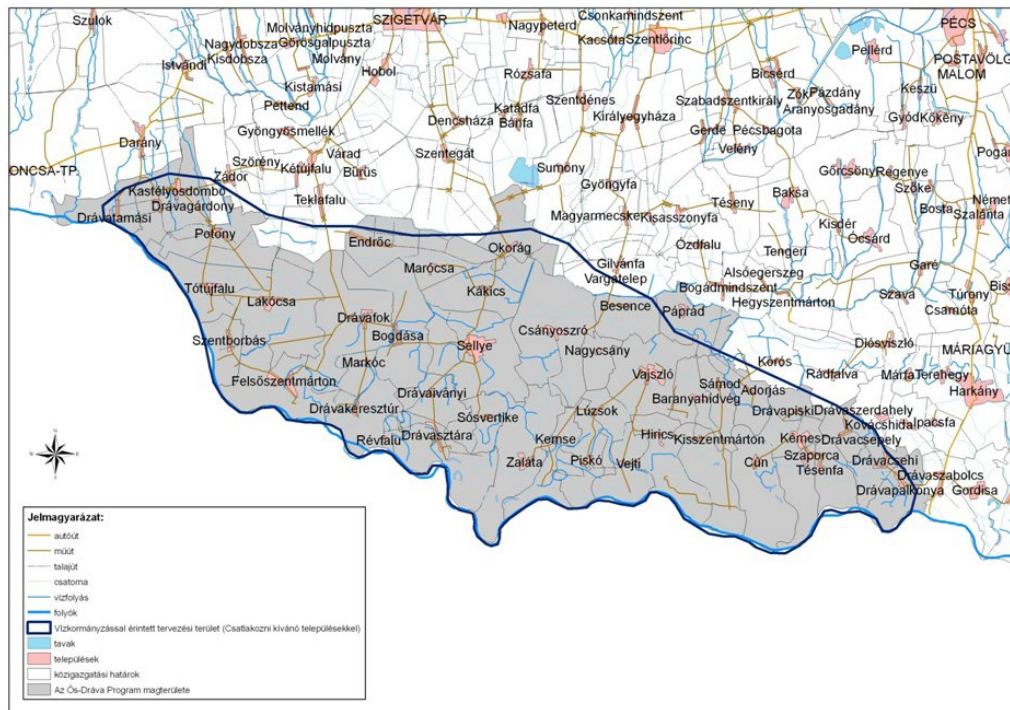
- water management: revitalisation of former oxbows as water supply for irrigated agriculture;
- development of more labour-intensive and higher value-added cultures (vegetables, fruits) instead of mass production of arable crops;
- development of the basis of cultural heritage;
- overall social regeneration through education and training.

The plan was followed by a water-supply concept, a technical documentation for water management, and a landscape and regional development programme. On basis of these documents the



government in 2010 has made a decision to launch the implementation of the programme. In 2012 a governmental decision was made on the launch of a complex development programme (natural, social, economic) based on surface water management. The decision included interventions into water management, changes in land-use, providing incentives to herb production and establishment of a ferry border-crossing on the Drava. In 2013 a governmental commissioner was named for overall coordination of the programme.

12. Figure: Territorial coverage of the Ancient Drava Programme



Source: <http://www.osdrava.hu/os-drava-program/> (16/10/2017).

Although the above decision showed clear turn towards complex area-based approach, parallel, in line with the amendment of the Regional and Spatial Development Act, a restructuring of the regional development institution system took place. Regional development councils (NUTS 2) have been ceased, the counties (NUTS 3) have become the responsible level for overall coordination of subnational regional development, taking over the coordinative roles of the NUTS 2 councils and their operational bodies, the regional development agencies. By concentrating the counties' functions to regional development coordination, parallel their institutional and public service provider functions have been abolished: former county-run educational, health and social care institutions have been taken over by the state, therefore local interactions of these institutions have become limited and subordinated to state management structures (various agencies, governmental offices). As the governmental commissioner named for the programme in 2013 was the person previously being the president of Baranya county, management of the programme has become completely state-driven one, weakening its bottom-up features, practically establishing a parallel state-run development structure to the county's.



Most important developments implemented under the programme were the revitalisation of some waterflows by public works, establishment of a nature interpretation centre in Szaporca (Ancient Drava Visitors Centre run by the Danube-Drava National Park), establishment of an oil milling plant, bicycle path along the Drava, some accommodation developments, renovation of traditional Calvinist churches as local monuments, promotion of local products. These activities were defined by governmental decision (1242/2012 VII. 17.), setting out the single project elements should be implemented by ERDF and EAFRD funding, dominantly through calls for priority projects.

Change in land-use, as one of the specific aims of the programme, has not been implemented, as production of arable crops is heavily subsidised by the Common Agricultural Policy, therefore private land owners have no interest to change their land-use priorities to more intensive and risky cultures. Therefore, significant improvement in local employment and added-value generation could not be realised.

Main advantage of the programme was the institutionalisation of communication between the local actors: regular meetings were held, project generation and implementation has been coordinated, the area has been put on the map of governmental decision makers. On the other hand central coordination step-by-step moved decision making to governmental level which has been met with dissatisfaction by some local decision makers, especially of those of larger municipalities having their own development capacities.

Based on interview with experts Cohesion Policy may be effective in establishing basic public infrastructure, which has been realised in the past two programming periods. Water management, sewage system, roads, public spaces, social infrastructure, some tourism-related local infrastructure may be developed by Cohesion Policy instruments, but no change in the attitude of the local population and the private sector is possible through these funding. Towns in the Hungarian rural areas are too small for Cohesion Policy which is tending to put more focus on cities and, rural areas lose their role as there is no instrument to cope with its problems, therefore part of rural settlements will disappear in the next decades.

### **5.3 Recommendation**

In case of rural areas development problems should be treated with complex programmes. Place-based approach in implementation of Cohesion Policy should be a must that requires professional coordination, however keeping the subsidiarity principle. Development and implementation of integrated complex programmes must base on local capacities that should have accountability and continuity: involvement in planning, programming and implementation, avoiding fluctuation and constant re-design of the regional development system.

Optimal level of territorial governance is a key issue in case of peripheral areas. On one hand a proper knowledge base and capacity has to be available which promotes larger regions. On the other hand the management bodies should have thorough in-field knowledge and experience which

promotes smaller, microregional units that can be beneficiaries of complex projects in a certain area. A combination of strong NUTS 2 or 3 bodies and active microregional capacities (LEADER e.g.) could be a good combination.

Beside infrastructure change has to be generated in attitude of local people that can be reached through general improvement of education, vocational training and awareness raising on actual development challenges. As this is a long process, stable network of locally active people is needed whose monitoring could be provided by the proposed institutions.

Shrinking rural areas imply changes in land use which has to be monitored. As in rural peripheries natural environment is usually in generally favourable conditions, enhancement of green areas may contribute to a general well-being of a wider area, contributing to a more sustainable regional development.

## **6 Natural and cultural heritage in Baranya county**

### **6.1 Thematic issues problems**

Culture is the collective of norms and forms of behaviour. Projects of cultural and natural heritage are proper for analysis of effects made by local developments to the cultural heritage, however development of cultural heritage elements may have economy development effects.

In case of Baranya county both natural and cultural heritage play a key role. The Danube-Drava National Park, nature protection areas in the Mecsek hills and throughout the region, the unspoilt natural sites in the Ormánság, their flora and fauna form a unique attraction. These are completed with cultural heritage elements, some of them are very unique: early Christian monuments in Pécs, historical town centres, castles and churches, thereof the churches with wooden painted ceilings are of key importance, the busó festival etc. Cultural diversity is revealed through the ethnical diversity of the population: significant German, Croat and other southern Slavs, Roma people make traditions alive, enriching the cultural supply of the county. This is reflected in the rich gastronomy.

Protection of cultural and natural heritage is promoted by spatial planning, however regulations have been loosened since 2010, local spatial plans still stress protection as important. Cohesion policy instruments aim at valorisation of natural and cultural assets, which is reflected in regional and local development concepts as a tool for infrastructure development, however successful valorisation practices are practically missing.

### **6.2 Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

Baranya county defined 'cultural industry' as a development priority. The Cultural Development Concept, elaborated in 2000, stated the importance of developing cultural industry: the county is possessing a cultural heritage which should be turned into a development asset, therefore it worth to be taken into consideration in spatial planning as well. Natural flora and fauna, the proximity of nature in rural areas is a special asset, however its valorisation has not been successful so far. On the other hand the lack of proper human infrastructure, education, passive approach and lack of private initiatives put the main obstacle.

Elements of cultural heritage contribute to the social capital of the local communities: makes local people active, strengthens identity. Therefore potential in natural and cultural heritage should be analysed, in order to establish a sustainable "heritage economy" (e.g. AVEC programme).

The following programmes and actions have been defined:

- Improvement of the awareness of creative industry, through promotion of setting up such enterprises.
- Strengthening of cross-border cooperation with Croatia, in order to reveal creative potentials and utilise the southern geographic position.

- Establishment and development of a regional cultural industry cluster.

The county has focused on the following development actions:

- Establishment of a local food and handicraft product basis, relying on local natural conditions, in order to utilise the capacities of low-qualified labour force.
- Development of communities: local civil organisations significantly contribute to the well-being of the area. By their assistance community development could be improved, in order to reveal local potentials and more efficient valorisation.
- Improvement of the accessibility of the county, especially of its more isolated areas.

These objectives – protection and valorisation of natural and cultural heritage – have been reflected in the originally elaborated Ancient Drava programme, whose aim was to generate a change in land-use, return of native species (plants, fishes), combined with revitalisation of cultural heritage elements. Regeneration of the water system is a very labour-intensive activity, needing a high number of local people (including long-term unemployed), as public workers. The originally developed bottom-up initiative has become a top-down programme, with governmental coordination, with significant dedicated financing, mostly from Cohesion Policy instruments, however its original objectives have not been met.

Tourism potential of the county lies in its diversity. This diversity needs the development of real tourism products, with strong synergies between them. In this approach cultural tourism plays a key role, especially in Pécs, basing on the UNESCO protected heritage site, conference tourism, multicultural environment, castles, wine, gastronomy and religion.

In the 2007-2013 programming period, by means of Cohesion Policy, players of the tourism industry have formulated their initiative to set up clusters in eight types of tourism products, including three, that have a direct relationship with heritage: world heritage tourism, festival tourism, castles and fortresses. Although these clusters have been established and have been operated for several years, strong entrepreneurial approach and professional coordination is missing. The regional branch of the former Hungarian Tourism Plc. has been a key player in the establishment and the operation, but this body has been closed in 2016, including the regional offices. Coordination role should be taken over by local tourism destination management bodies that are financially weak and depend on the support of the member local governments that usually promote a strictly local approach instead of an area-based one that results the exit of several financially and tourism-wise weaker small municipalities from such organisations.

In spite of its development vision and efforts, Pécs could not become an alternative pole of culture, beside the capital of Budapest. This setting could be changed only through continuous product development, business service provision and targeted educational programmes. In case of Pécs the Zsolnay Cultural Quarter plays the role of a permanent product display site, beside entertainment and gastronomy, it is an ideal location for promotion and selling of local products as well.

Tourism developments are dominantly based on cultural heritage, especially in case of Pécs. In connection with the European Capital of Culture 2010 title tourism infrastructure has been significantly developed:

- Kodály Centre – concert and multifunctional event hall;
- Sites of the UNESCO World Heritage (early-Christian Necropolis in the area of the cathedral);
- The Zsolnay Cultural Quarter – rehabilitation of a former, partially abandoned, industrial site.
- Exhibition Hall.
- Regional Library and Knowledge Centre.
- Revitalisation of squares and public spaces.

Even if Pécs is the key product from tourism point of view, the county has several smaller destinations that are hard to be marketed as individual products. They must be linked to other tourism products in the nearby area. They are castles, sacral sites, some unique festivals, traditional workshops, traditional crafts, particular architecture, landscape, wine and gastronomy – they could be competitive only as part of tourism packages.

### **6.3 Recommendation**

Cohesion policy is not able to provide solution for protection of natural and cultural heritage, as Cohesion Policy must follow EU2020 objectives where all three pillars of sustainability must be met, however preservation of natural sites and protection of cultural assets is often impossible to be done in an economically sustainable way. Therefore local initiatives, national, regional and local financing is necessary for preservation of values, especially in rural areas that is often out of the scope of Cohesion Policy.

Valorisation of heritage must be promoted, development of viable tourism products can be learned, therefore awareness raising on product development and promotion should be strengthened in education and vocational training of tourism workers, especially focusing on use of IT tools and learning of foreign languages. On one hand local initiatives are key asset, therefore local activities should be promoted through instruments such as community-led local development, while in education and technical support regional and national institutions may play a crucial role.

## **7 Cross-border regions in Győr-Moson-Sopron county**

### **7.1 Thematic issues problems**

In the Hungary-Slovakia border area, in spite of its intensive cross-border interactions, public transport is very poor or missing. On the western part of the border area large number of residents of Bratislava opts for moving out to the suburbs located on the Hungarian side that have become part of the agglomeration that generates a demand for transport. Middle part of the borderline of the county is characterised by several Danube tributaries (Szigetköz), by small villages, with no significant transport demand, therefore on-land (bridge) connection would be very expensive, water transport should be an applicable solution. Eastern part of the border area is the catchment area of the city of Győr that extends to the Slovakian side as well. Connection between the city and the Slovakian settlements is intensive, business-related commuting was typical for a long time, however Győr has remained a centre for trade, education and services. Public transport service has been first started in 2013. It is a general characteristic that the growing number of interactions are realised by car, share of public transport in the modal split is minimal. Even recent improvements are operating with low efficiency threatening their sustainability.

International railway connections from Budapest don't cross the county: they cross the border at Szob (north from Budapest), using dominantly the Slovakian side towards Bratislava. In Győr-Moson-Sopron county a railway border crossing is existing at Rajka, which is directly connected to the Budapest–Vienna railway line that crosses the fast growing cross-border agglomeration of Bratislava. In spite of its existence and favourable position, it is used for freight transport only, there is no passenger transport for 10 years, however planned to be re-opened. Bus service operated by Hungarian companies has been closed in 2011, some private bus companies offer long-distance services (Budapest–Berlin) through the county, but they are not tailored for regional transport. Water transport service has not been set up between the two countries until now.

In spite of its favourable geographical position, the proximity of large capital cities and intensive cross-border cooperation public transport connections could not satisfy the local and regional demand as it is dominated by large-distance connections and poorly tailored thus under-utilised local connections.

### **7.2 Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

Problems written above have been attempted to solve by the Hungary-Slovakia-Ukraine Neighbourhood Programme 2004-2006 and the Hungary-Slovakia Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013, under specific objective no. 3 "Improved accessibility and communication of the border area". The current Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2014–2020 includes the Priority axis 2 "Enhancing cross-border mobility", whose total budget amounts to 40,715,389 EUR.

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Currently available implemented investments have been co-financed by the past programmes. Scheduled bus services have been established between Bratislava and Rajka (numbered as Bratislava local bus service) and a service between Győr and Velký Meder. Moreover, a scheduled ferry service has been launched in the Szigetköz having primarily tourism role. Out of these projects the Rajka–Bratislava scheduled bus seems to be sustainable, while the other bus and the ferry has low utility ratio. Railway connection has not been established yet, however it is planned to be launched in December 2017.

Cross-border services generate several administrative problems. According to regulations cross-border public transport is not allowed to use for inland transport, only for passengers crossing the border that generates low interest at the moment. The Győr–Velký Meder bus connection, due to its inefficient timetable, is not proper for commuting. These services have been undertaken by local governments that don't have the needed financial and technical knowledge. Railway connection was also hindered by administrative obstacles, however the Mosonmagyaróvár–Bratislava connection is to be launched as passenger service, being the connection with the highest capacity in this area, significantly improving cross-border accessibility.

Cohesion policy promotes the development of large transnational railway connections, while regional-level connections remain member-state priority. Regional traffic – with the exception of large agglomerations – is more a challenge than an opportunity, especially cross-border connections. National governments and state-owned railway companies don't consider them as public service, however joint financing of the service could generate a solution that needs only minimal additional support.

Railway transport in Hungary is provided by MÁV and the GYSEV/Raaberbahn (“Győr-Sopron-Ebenfurti Vasút Zrt.”, in German “Raab–Oedenburg–Ebenfurter Eisenbahn AG”). The former is a state-owned company covering the whole Hungary, while the latter is an Austrian-Hungarian joint company, covering Western Hungary and Eastern Austria. Its operation was guaranteed by international agreements throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, having expanded its rolling stock and connections, both internal and external ones. This cooperation has no connection to Slovakia. GYSEV has taken over the Rajka–Hegyeshalom railway section where passenger service was closed by MÁV, even the railways were planned to be removed. GYSEV has been attempting to open services to Bratislava, but they have not been succeeded due to Slovakian resistance, as their recently bought Stadler Flirt rolling stock is not authorised in Slovakia. Locomotives and wagons must have been replaced with Austrian Jenbacher rolling stock that are already in use between Austria and Slovakia. Recently even the Slovakian side has acknowledged that revitalising railway connections may reduce car traffic, which is desirable. The foreseen clock-face scheduling will further strengthen suburbanisation on the Hungarian side, however the service would not generate a direct connection to the centre of Bratislava, only through a transfer in Petržalka. However, the example shows public transport is often not an issue of money, but more of will and agreement.

Biggest obstacle to bus service development in Hungary is that it is provided by state-owned companies, while in Slovakia they have been privatised. In Hungary private companies are only present in international and long-distance connections, and are not allowed to carry inland (also regional cross-border) passengers on their vehicles. Past scheduled buses have been seized, large employers in Győr solved cross-border commuting by rented buses, further needs have been fulfilled by car. The Győr–Veľky Meder connection has been established by an Interreg project in 2015: Veľky Meder has bought two buses which have been given to the local bus company in Slovakia. In the beginning there were five pairs of buses per day, currently only two. The bus connects several points of interest on both sides, but it is not allowed to carry inland passengers, they are not integrated into national public transport systems, so they don't provide transferring options. It is used mainly by students, tourism does not generate significant demand. The example shows that good local initiatives are not enough for sustaining cross-border services due to non-flexible, non-compatible national systems.

### **7.3 Recommendation**

Development of regional cross-border connections can't be realised without the interest and involvement of national states and state-owned companies. Their role is to provide service inside their countries. Even if the state itself does not appear as service provider, new connections must be harmonised with the state-ordered public transport connections that may generate new passengers also on the state-ordered services. This requires profound need assessment and planning.

Public transport is a subsidised system everywhere. Self-sustaining connections are rather exceptions, especially cross-border regional ones. Therefore, local governments, who are usually beneficiaries of these projects, won't be able to sustain them, thus role of the state-owned companies has to be defined in advance and must be involved in several aspects: time-table planning, use of infrastructure, communication channels etc.

Promotion is essential for generation of demand. Existing connections are not well-known by the public, they are not even included into the online schedules. Timetables are available only on their own websites. It is important to promote tourist attractions of the other side, as most of the possible passengers will be probably tourists.



## **8 Support for local economy in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county**

### **8.1 Thematic issues problems – support for local economy**

Support to the local economy has been provided to target areas by national resources prior to the EU accession. Since 2004 opportunities have been opened to use EU funding for promotion of local economy. Most of the major investments in the area have been realised by these financial instruments. EU-integration and Cohesion Policy instruments opened new opportunities for local economy support, however avoidance of distortion of competition should be respected. This means support to SMEs should not be selective as equal opportunities must be provided to companies irrespectively to their ownership background.

In Hungary support of local economies is strongly emphasised by actual development concepts, both on national and in all counties. In order to set priorities the government has defined priority areas whose development plans are adopted by the Parliament. The Tokaj hills area has become a priority development region by the recent amendment of the Spatial Planning Act in 2016.

### **8.2 Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

National regional development and EU-funded cohesion policy has provided several instruments for the development of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county and its sub-regions. Recent amendments to the Regional Development and Spatial Planning Act (2016) has made the Tokaj Wine Region a priority region, with its own regional development bodies and instruments. Its regional development concept shall be approved by the Parliament in form of a separate act.

Development concept (2013) and land-use plan (2009) of the county has emphasised the significance of specific sub-regions (including Tokaj) and allocated financial resources as well. An additional instrument has been created by the state, as special development concept and programme must be elaborated for it. The area has been treated with special attention since 2010. In 2013 a governmental decision has been made on the most important elements of its development (Tokaj Hills National Programme). It resulted the establishment of the Tokaj Wine Area Development Council (as area development council, according to the Regional and Spatial Development Act). The National Programme has been allocated a sum of 1.8 billion HUF (approx. 5.8 million EUR), dominantly for projects related to wine-growing and tourism.

Proclamation of Tokaj Wine Area as priority region resulted the establishment of the Regional Development Council for Tokaj priority region, which is supported by the Tokaj Wine Region Development Nonprofit Ltd. It has elaborated the thorough situation analysis of the area, then drafted its development concept. No spatial land-use plan has been created, though, which is a real discrepancy, as county land-use plan was made in other dimensions, local units (towns, municipalities) have elaborated their own land-use plans beforehand, without proper coordination. Involved towns (Abaújszántó, Sátoraljaújhely, Sárospatak, Szerencs, Tokaj) have been developed ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

integrated urban development strategies that don't go beyond their administrative borders, however development of these urban areas may spill over the countryside of the area.

13. Figure: The Tokaj Wine Growing Area (including the Slovakian part of the traditional wine-growing area).



Source: CERS HAS, own edition.

The Priority Area Development Programme focuses on various kinds of tourism, such as cultural, water, health and hiking tourism. The area has been proclaimed even as “priority tourism development area” in 2017, with a wider territorial coverage (Tokaj, Upper-Tisza and Nyírség – altogether 73 settlements), which title goes along with significant national budget resources and EU-funded support (economy development and innovation, integrated transport infrastructure development) as well.

### 8.3 Recommendation

Proclamation of Tokaj as priority region and setting up of development tools have generated an intervention into the area's economy. Due to its generally undeveloped character and the great potentials purchase of wine-growing properties has become a popular investment among investors from outside the wider Tokaj area. This process has even been strengthened through the various incentives and benefits, therefore a large number of new investors have entered the area, generating an intensified concentration of land ownership and decrease in takeover price of the harvested grape which is the key income source of small local producers. This process may lead to the disappearance

of a high number of local producers and may generate unfavourable tendencies in the area – unemployment, deterioration of the landscape, depopulation of small villages.–| In order to promote environmental and social sustainability, should be avoided. In general terms support to local economies should not be selective but must be thoroughly monitored in order to provide equal opportunities to all actors and promote sustainability in the area.

The new instruments developed for the special area could not be cross-fertilised by Cohesion Policy since Cohesion Policy instruments and their priorities have been defined by the Partnership Agreement for the 2014-2020 programming period. The Development Concept of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county stresses out some of the particularities of the area but the instruments have not been specifically tailored to the Tokaj area, most of the measures have been implemented by national funding schemes. Significant cross-fertilisation might be expected in the next programming period.

## 9 Good practice no 1: Polycentricity and suburbanisation in Central Hungary

The coordination on spatial planning in the Budapest agglomeration dates back to the late 1990s.

The first development concept and the first development programme of the Budapest agglomeration in 1999 were developed in close cooperation of different stakeholders of the suburban region and were approved by the Budapest Agglomeration Development Council. The creation of the land-use plan for the suburban region adopted by the Hungarian Parliament in 2005 was also based on a region-wide consultation process with the local governments concerned. Despite all the differences and debates between Budapest and Pest County, the good cooperation on spatial planning has been prosperous since then: spatial planning documents on different level (NUTS2 region, Budapest agglomeration, Pest county and Budapest city) have often set common goals, including promoting polycentric and more balanced territorial development in the suburban region. Coordination of the planning practice frequently relied on informal cooperation of the involved experts.

A new chapter in spatial planning was started with the administrative reform in Hungary. After the abolition of the Budapest Agglomeration Development Council and the NUTS2 level institutions (regional councils, regional development agencies) no formal institution has remained for the coordination of the spatial planning activity on suburban level. Meanwhile, 2014-2020 EU regulations emphasized the place-based and integrated approach and introduced new regional coordination facilitating tools, particularly the ITI and CLLD. Although the Hungarian Government finally did not apply the “integrated territorial investment” , the integrated approach has been appeared in the Hungarian spatial planning practice. A new statutory local level planning instrument, the “integrated urban development strategy” has been introduced. The Local Government of Budapest and the district local governments also elaborated their integrated urban development strategies in 2013 (approved in 2014). Budapest reviewed its strategy in 2016. The document paid much attention to the territorial aspects of the planned developments, concentrated on areas of actions overcrossing district borders and determining the urban structure, and also set up a horizontal goal of having a proactive and coordinative role in the metropolitan region.

According to this role, the Local Government of Budapest initiated coordination of the planned interventions and projects on three pre-defined topics that had been previously laid down in the long-term development concept “Budapest 2030”. These topics included the coordinated development of the Danube riverside, the rehabilitation of brownfield areas and social urban regeneration. Selection of these topics clearly reflected that the city government took polycentric and more balanced territorial government as its primary goal. The initiative was based on the principle that an integrated strategy needs continuous cooperation and working

partnership between governmental, civil and economic actors. The planning exercise started in January 2014 and ran for six months with involvement of the Local Government of Budapest, the 23 district governments, Pest County, the authorities concerned and some professional organisations. Aim of the process was elaboration of three thematic development programmes, which should be basic documents to lay down joint development directions and serve identification and preparation of projects implemented by European Union funding. The results were strategic documents with realisable goals, the planning process, the implementation of programmes, and the agreement of the most important brownfield and Danube area development projects of the next seven years. (These projects were also demonstrated on a schematic map of the city.)

In line with the request of the districts and Pest County, along with the approval of the three thematic programmes, a fourth thematic document on economic development and job creation has been developed in the first half of 2015. Six parties participated at expert level in elaboration of the strategy: Budapest Local Government; the 23 district governments; the Government of Pest County; two state secretariats of the Ministry for National Economy; the Prime Minister's Office; National Research, Development and Innovation Office; the Budapest Local Government Department's Employment Centre and eight entrepreneurial organisations along with the Budapest Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The strategy was previously debated and accepted by a decision-making body composed of the leaders (mayors and delegates) of the Budapest Local Government and the 23 district governments.

Planning process of the thematic programmes looked the following: the General Assembly of Budapest created subject-based working groups meeting every week. Basic function of the decision-making working groups was the management of the planning procedure, adoption of the programmes and an arbitrary function at meetings. The planning partnership began with analysis of the Budapest 2030 goals and assessment of the initial situation. During the situation analysis, important challenges and useful potentials were discovered. Definition of a mid-term goal was of core importance. The next step was to determine the perspectives that help to decide the most effective projects. The last phase consisted in the discussion of the projects, their modification, adoption and creation of suggestions for the final proposal. The social urban regeneration programme and the economic programme required different approach. After determination of mid-term thematic goals, the second phase determined the principles and directives of the project plans and their implementation. For the social urban regeneration programme in the third phase an action plan has been determined as well.

The planning process included measures that did not rely only on the Central Hungarian Regional Operational Programme, but also on the sectoral OPs (e.g. Integrated Transport Development), given that their implementation is closely linked to the realisation of the mid-term goals discussed of the thematic development programme.

During the planning phase high public involvement was of core importance. The continuously updated [www.budapestfejlesztes.hu](http://www.budapestfejlesztes.hu) website assisted the project, providing information after every working group meeting; it also enabled the public to share their opinion regarding the updated materials and to send their own project suggestions.

Another important tool to inform the public was the open forum, held four times. Professional and civic organisations, along with public representatives participated at these forums. Each time they were informed about the actual status of the planning procedure and had the opportunity to share their opinion regarding the different planning points. Later these opinions were incorporated into the final materials.

According to a study of the Ministry for National Economy, the thematic development programmes, as new planning tool and the cooperative planning practice of their elaboration, has been considered a good model for later planning cooperation on agglomeration level in case of split of the Central Hungary statistical region into two separate NUTS2 units.

Beyond the above mentioned good practice there are other initiatives scoping the coordination of the planning activities of different stakeholders in the Budapest agglomeration. These actions mainly concern the cooperation of neighbouring municipal governments including districts of Budapest and suburban settlements on exact development projects. The most fruitful cooperation of the recent years has been the cooperation on revitalisation of the Rákos stream. There was a continuous discussion between the Local Government of Budapest, the four city districts concerned, Pest County and the four municipalities concerned about the harmonization of the planned developments along the streamside. Finally, on basis of the agreement of all local governments a feasibility study was undertaken by the city government and a development programme has been realised in two harmonized documents: one for Budapest and one for Pest County. Based on these documents for the section of the stream concerning the City of Budapest a development project has been financed by the EU through the Competitive Central Hungary OP. Another project has been developed and presented to the Hungarian Government for the section concerning Pest County, to be financed by the state.

Another promising cooperation forms are the economic clusters. In the Budapest suburban region the only operating cluster is the Budapest Airport Region Cluster founded by the Local Government of the XVIII. District (Pestszentlőrinc-Pestszentimre), the Town of Vecsés, Local Government of Budapest, Pest County Government, the aviation control organization of the state (HungaroControl Magyar Légiforgalmi Zrt). and a private company operating the Budapest Airport. The scope of this organization is to build up cooperation of the different stakeholders for the development in the area of the Budapest Liszt Ferenc Airport. These networks could serve as a solid base for future planning activities either.

Promoting polycentric and more balanced territorial development is a great challenge for Central Hungary due to its fragmented administrative and land-use planning structure. Unfortunately, the EU cohesion policy could not contribute to overcome these conflicts. Meanwhile phenomenon of urban sprawl has become more and more pressing and has severely hindered the development of the whole region. Some of the local actors – mainly the Local Government of Budapest, Pest County Government and the local planning experts – have recognized the need for new planning methods and new forms of cooperation in this controversial and continually changing administrative and regulatory context. Their partial successes – like setting up common goals in the planning documents of Budapest City and Pest County based on a region-wide consultation process, integrated approach in planning, thematic and sub-regional planning documents developed in partnership cooperation – could be considered as good models for later planning practice.

## **10 Good practice no. 2: Cross-border regions in Győr-Moson-Sopron counties**

It is evident then that Bratislava has a specific position in the border region and has a unique spatial structural situation. Its geographical endowments predestine the city to expand its urban area beyond the border, and the economic growth of the city requires new territories as well.

The direction of outmigration and the maximum distance of location from the city are influenced by transport conditions and the geographical environment. State borders hinder the city from west and south, north and northeast of the city we find mountains whose beauty and pleasant residential conditions offer good (but expensive) conditions for dwellings. Good transport conditions towards north and northwest are secured by the motorways. East of the city the area is plain, favourable for spatial expansion, but capacities of transport infrastructure in this direction are weak. Primary direction of migration is to the northwest. The motorway offers good accessibility to Brno and Senec (Trnava). Besides these areas with good transport connections areas located on the other sides of borders were slowly discovered. The neighbouring Austrian and Hungarian villages are much closer to the inner city than the majority of the settlements in the Bratislava agglomeration, and the road infrastructure is in good conditions, especially to Hungary.

The phenomenon of residential mobility, suburbanisation on Hungarian side started intensively after 2007, and first concerned two villages along the border: Rajka (which is practically neighbouring the City of Bratislava) and Dunakiliti, which is separated from the administrative area of the Slovak capital by the Danube River. These are still the villages mostly concerned in the suburbanisation process: by now approximately 50% of the inhabitants of Rajka (the official number of inhabitants: 2,495; the est. number 5,000 pers.) are Slovak citizens. After arrival of the first migrants, the increased real estate prices led to the appearance of Slovak home owners in the second and third row of the settlements (Bezenye, Feketeerdő, Dunasziget, Mosonmagyaróvár and other settlements in their proximity). Mosonmagyaróvár is the central town of the area, where the proportion of incoming Slovaks is low, but the largest number of homes owned by Slovak citizens can be found here.

We have to remark that we do not have exact information on the number of immigrants as many of them do not register themselves officially in their new place of residence (a similar phenomenon can be observed on the Slovakian side as well). Also, according to the Hungarian law, a foreign citizen can only be permanent resident in a settlement after five years of living there. Citizens of an EU member state can freely buy real estates in Hungary, but they have a reporting obligation of the real estate acquired. Taking all these facts into



consideration, the number of Slovak citizens who have settled down in Hungary in the foreground of Bratislava is estimated to be between 5,000 and 8,000.

The number of people residing on the Hungarian side is expected to increase, as the municipalities, reacting to the demand, have designated new residential areas in the settlements and the constructions have already been started. Also, housing constructions on business ground have been launched: semi-detached houses consisting of several homes have been built. The customers and clients are almost exclusively Slovak citizens.

According to our surveys approximately 80% of the new settlers are Slovaks, although some half of the respondents speak or understand Hungarian at some level, from native language to simple understanding. This significant population commutes to its working place on daily basis, just like any other agglomeration resident, meanwhile they cross a state border as well, not only a local administrative border.

Conditions of road transport are good, as both motorway and public road is connecting the two sides, moreover a railway line which has not been used for passenger traffic for a long time. Presuming that suburbanisation is likely to continue, Regional Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has organised a focus group then a workshop in 2009, with involvement of public transport companies. Invitation has been accepted by DBP (Slovak regional and Bratislava local bus service), representatives of the Austria-Hungarian railway company GYSEV, representatives of line ministries and the local government of the capital of Bratislava. Hungarian State Railways have been considering the closedown of the Rajka railway line that time, therefore they were not interested in the development. The key step has been taken by the City of Bratislava (Magistrát hlavného mesta SR Bratislavy) and the Municipality of Rajka. Between 2009 and 2010 a cross-border cooperation project has been developed, with the lead partnership of the City of Bratislava, in order to set up the bus line no. 801, connecting the village of Rajka and Bratislava city. DPB have had some experience, as they had previously launched a local cross-border bus line to the Austrian place of Hainburg that is a target area of suburban residents in Austria. According to the project description, project objectives were the following: Considering the poor transport facilities in the cross-border regions the aim of the project was to establish a new international bus line between Bratislava and Rajka and to improve the accessibility of the region for the inhabitants of Bratislava, Rusovce, Jarovce, Čunovo and Rajka. The project strengthened cross-border relations between the Slovak Republic and Hungary – enabled the citizens living in the border area to travel to their work comfortably, to travel to enjoy cultural attractions, but also to use services offered in the City of Bratislava. The project helped to improve the living conditions of the citizens in border areas of Bratislava Region and Győr-Moson-Sopron County. Total budget of the project amounted to 391,024.00 EUR.

The newly established scheduled bus provides:

- Connection between the municipality of Rajka and the city of Bratislava, through their settlements;
- Connection between the municipality of Rajka and the centre of Bratislava, particularly the new National Theatre and its environment;
- Establishment of a connection on a new route between the villages of Čunovo, Rusovce, Jarovce and the centre of the city.

The bus has several stops inside Rajka, providing boarding option in different parts of the settlement. The service was allowed to be used for inland travels as well on the Slovakian side. Terminus of the bus line was previously the National Theatre, currently it goes only to the railway station of Rusovce. In spite of the cut of the line it has become better to use: frequency of one hour has been increased to half hour in rush hours, Rusovce railway station offers several transfer options.

The bus line is well used, therefore from sustainability point of view it does not differ from other suburban bus lines. Important to point out that the new service targeted an existing market demand as suburban commuting is a key issue in case of all metropolitan areas, generating huge demand to one direction. Therefore the bus line is considered as relatively sustainable in financial terms. Definition of the route, later its modification was based on measurements of the company's expert staff. The Slovak company could come to an agreement with the Hungarian public transport company who has the concession on the Hungarian side for public service and use of the bus stops.

Establishment of the bus connection has been financed by the Hungary-Slovakia Cross-border Cooperation Programme, it did not have any connection to mainstream Cohesion Policy instruments.

In spite of the success of the Rajka–Bratislava project, cross-border public transport connections have neither been included into the spatial plans, nor are mentioned in regional development concepts or mainstream Cohesion Policy documents. In order to promote sustainability of similar projects, interrelation with spatial planning and mainstream regional development instruments must be ensured.

## 11 Conclusions

Case studies of spatial development in Hungary were selected in order to present those regions in detail, which are from some reason particular in terms of spatial planning and are proper to emphasise the relevance of the single thematic issues in Hungary.

Hungary is a unitary country, regulation of spatial planning is defined by national law, which provides a rather uniform approach in the planning practice. Special regions are defined by law, where adoption of some document is delegated to the Parliament, in form of a separate act. The land-use plan of the Balaton Lake Recreational Area and the Budapest Agglomeration is such a document: they are adopted as a separate act. While for the priority regions of Balaton Lake Recreational Area and Tokaj Wine Growing Region particular regional development bodies are set up that have the task to elaborate the priority region's spatial development concept and development programme. Out of these three "particular" issues two has been presented as case study, one of them as a good practice.

In the counties in general – which is the main body responsible for spatial planning and territorial governance on sub-national level – spatial planning documents include the land-use plan, the development concept and the county development programme. Two regions have been selected that have been thoroughly researched in the past years. Győr-Moson-Sopron has been a winner of spatial changes since the 1990s, a good example of a rapidly developing region, located in the vicinity of two capitals of neighbouring countries, which could make its cross-border connections viable and witnesses the forming of a transnational zone of economic growth. The other selected county was Baranya – in light of two thematic issues – as a region of peripherisation and economic stagnation where natural and cultural heritage supposed to be the driving force of development. The two "regular" counties showcase two completely different development paths.

Central Hungary and Győr-Moson-Sopron share a similarity: both are dominated by growing urban agglomerations which is the key to their development. In case of Central Hungary this is evidential, however it wasn't a one-way process. Even if re-urbanisation in Budapest is a visible phenomenon today, the region for a very long period witnessed shrinking of the capital city and rapid suburbanisation of the periphery that turned green areas into residential and business zones. Even if interests of Budapest and Pest county differ – the latter is being partially an urbanised agglomeration and partially a rural agricultural area – cooperation has been institutionalised and has been proved as successful. Even if achieving better position in co-financing from Cohesion Policy instruments the split of Pest county from Budapest is on the agenda, institutionalisation of cooperation remains. Adoption of the thematic development programmes is a good example for bottom-up approach and recognition of joint interests that generated joint actions. Partnership behind the elaboration process was coordinated by proper expertise background, involving all relevant players.

In case of Győr-Moson-Sopron the growing agglomeration is actually located outside the region itself – in Vienna and Bratislava – making some parts of the region becoming an agglomeration of these cities. Even if Győr and its agglomeration has been a growing pole in Hungary itself – being for a long time a magnet for workers from Slovakia, due to more competitive salaries in the automotive industry – development of nearby emerging cities has turned parts of the region into suburban zones of neighbouring capitals. This has redefined its spatial structure: peripheral villages have become residential areas of Bratislava, resulting joint actions in seeking solution in public transport. The regional railway service provider has extended its existing Austrian-Hungarian railway services towards Bratislava, local public transport service provider could conclude an agreement of use of Hungarian infrastructure to extend their local bus lines towards the bordering villages in Hungary. These solutions were realised through bottom-up initiatives – by cross-border cooperation instruments of the Cohesion Policy combined with private capital of the transport companies – as there has been a relevant market demand. Even if demand exists and projects are implemented, for ensuring sustainability support of the relevant state bodies (line ministries, state-owned companies) is essential.

The two peripheral regions (Tokaj and Baranya) provide examples of state intervention in lagging regions. In case of Tokaj the intervention has been carried out through entering the area into the spatial planning law as priority region that resulted establishment of institutional structures and a close eye of the government on the development of the region. The priority region status meant to be set up to provide support to the local economy. As the local economy is dominated by a state-owned player, purchaser of the grape, which is the main product of the area, its policy may have a direct effect on the local economy. As purchase prices tend to shrink in the past years, success of state interventions in other policy areas might be limited, on the other hand fosters concentration of land and quit of local small producers.

Baranya county has no special status, however the Ancient Drava programme has been launched in order to set a new development path for the particularly isolated southwestern part of the county (Ormánság). A set of priority projects has been defined, funds have been allocated, project management capacities have been set up. Most of the investments has been realised, but the original aim – shift to a more sustainable land-use that generates higher added value on local level – has not been realised. In spite of the richness in natural and cultural heritage, the potential in tourism, the isolated position, negative demographic tendencies and lack of local demand might make state interventions unsustainable.

The four examples show spatial setting and relationship with the growing urban zones affect spatial development and land-use. In these regions bottom-up cooperation may generate synergies and added value. On the other hand intervention in the presented peripheral areas

has been made from state level, with limited involvement of the local population, objectives could not be reached.

Cohesion Policy instruments played various roles in the particular examples and practices. Objectives of Cohesion Policy instruments have been designed by the Member States – in line with the EU 2020 targets – therefore they reflect the national development policy objectives. Cohesion Policy is not sufficiently flexible to react in all cases. In case of large agglomerations (Budapest) Objective 2 instruments might promote competitiveness in the urban area of the NUTS2 region, but additional state-funded scheme was needed to establish to promote cooperation between the capital city and Pest county. In case of Győr-Moson-Sopron county cross-border cooperation played a pioneer role to set up and test innovative services, but without proper interlink with state-ordered public services and mainstream Cohesion Policy their sustainability is questionable. Similar linkages are seen in case of the other presented examples: Cohesion Policy instruments might appear as a financing instrument if linkage with state-defined development objectives is existent, but complex place-based approach is inevitable to cope with particular challenges of rural areas that must go along with additional state funding.

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# COMPASS – Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe

## **Case Study Report: Ireland**

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## Abbreviations

BRL	Ballymun Regeneration Limited
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CASP	Cork Area Strategic Plan
CEDRA	Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas
CEF	Connecting Europe Facility
CSO	Central Statistics Office
EC	European Commission
EIB	European Investment Bank
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
GDA	Greater Dublin Area
KI	Key Informant
LAU	Local Administration Unit
LCDC	Local Community and Development Committee
LECP	Local and Economic Community Plan
MASP	Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan
MNC	Multi National Corporation
NPF	National Planning Framework
NSS	National Spatial Strategy
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
REDZ	Rural Economic Development Zones
ROP	Regional Operational Programme
RSES	Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SICAP	Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme
SID	Strategic Infrastructure Development
SPA	Strategic Planning Area
TA2020	Territorial Agenda 2020
TEN-T	Trans European Transport Network

# 1. Introduction

Cohesion policy, EU Directives and European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) profoundly influence Irish Spatial Planning and territorial governance. Between 2000 – 2016, the changing priorities of regional investment in Ireland match thematic objectives of Cohesion policy for each period, for example between 2007 -2013 the themes were innovation & knowledge economy, environment & accessibility and support for enterprises. The economic crisis in Ireland over that period stymied the priority of 'sustainable urban development' due to a lack of financing (Southern Regional Assembly, 2017).

The National Development Plan (2000-2006, 2007-2013) which included national road networks and regeneration programmes was funded in part by Cohesion Funds. In addition, European Structural funds have contributed to projects such as Dublin's light railway system (LUAS), bus corridors, re-use of buildings for public use and broadband technology (Smyth, 1998).

Many local development programmes and projects continue to be funded by PEACE, LEADER and INTERREG facilitating diverse rural communities to develop ground up projects suited to their needs. The National Spatial Strategy (2002-2020) transferred concepts from the European Spatial Development Perspective with concepts such as 'balanced regional development', 'gateways' and 'hubs'. Strategic (regional) Planning Guidelines were produced in 1999. Despite a National Spatial Strategy and two National Development Plans having set balanced regional development as a core objective (MacFeely, Moloney, & Kenneally, 2011) the non-compliance of regional policy was acknowledged after a High Court case (McEvoy & Smith vs Meath County Council 2002) which challenged the action of a local authority that failed to 'have regard' to the strategic planning guidelines when adopting their local plan.<sup>26</sup>

As the documents did not have sufficient regulatory compliance order, all-government support, leadership and the legal basis for implementation was very weak. It is currently subject to a major reform process which is expected to be completed in 2018. The Strategic Planning Guidelines (1999) preceded the Regional Planning Guidelines and now, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) (draft phase – issues paper stage). It is written into the Planning and Development Act 2016 and for the first time the word 'economic'

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<sup>26</sup> Section 27 (1) of the Planning and Development Act of 2000 provides that: "A planning authority shall have regard to any regional planning guidelines in force for its area when making and adopting a development plan." The High court ruled in favour of the local authority as the judge stated that "To have regard to" did not mean, "slavishly to adhere to". It requires the planning authority to consider the development plan, but does not oblige them to follow it. Subsequently in the Planning and Development Act 2010 the wording was changed and the concept of core strategy was introduced, requiring compliance of local development plan with regional plans and national strategy.<http://www.lwig.net/Research/Legal/Quirke-Judgement-McCoy-and-Smith-vs-Meath-CoCo.pdf>

is used alongside 'spatial' in a regional planning strategy in Ireland<sup>27</sup>. The present government hopes to get the newly proposed draft National Planning Framework 2040 (draft phase - public consultation stage) passed in the parliament so that it becomes the statutory basis for managing future development in Ireland (Coveney, 2017). Both the draft national and regional strategies are rich in statistics and evidence based data and represent a shift to more evidence based policy making.

In 2015 the former regional assemblies NUTS 2 (Border, Midlands & West - BMW and Southern & Eastern - S&E) were restructured. Three new NUTS 2 regional assemblies were formed. Eight regional authorities responsible for NUTS 3 areas were dissolved (June 2014)<sup>28</sup> removing the governance structure of regional authorities at NUTS 3 level. Regional authorities' staff joined the new regional assemblies, strengthening the organisation and competences of regional assemblies. The new regional assemblies manage over 76% of the EU budget with national and regional authorities through a shared management system through 5 EU funds<sup>29</sup> (Southern Regional Assembly, 2016). Each region produces a Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) that has a set of investment priorities to meet the strategic objectives of the region, aligning compliance between TA2020, EU directives, RSES, national spatial strategy, local development plans and local economic community plans of local authorities to ensure compliance with identified local and regional needs (Southern Regional Assembly, 2017)

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<sup>27</sup> Before there were two separate documents – Regional Planning Guidelines and Regional Economic Strategy

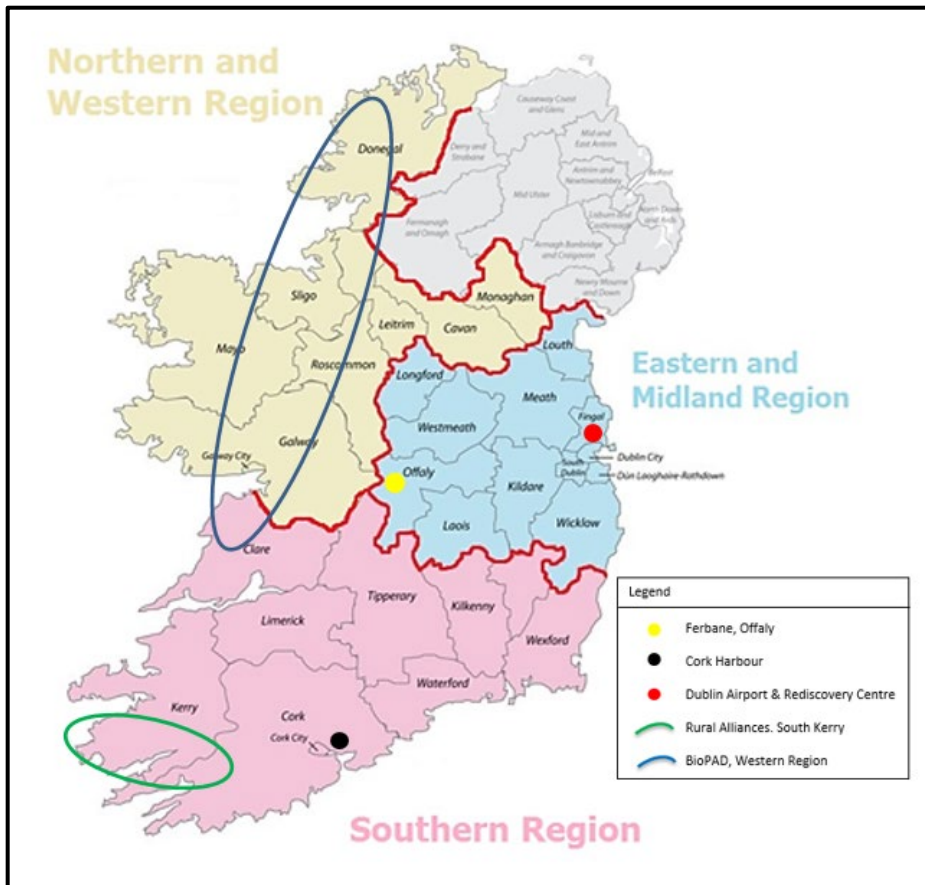
<sup>28</sup> Eight NUTS 3 strategic planning areas – 1. Dublin 2. Midland 3. Eastern, in Eastern Midland region; 4. Northern(Border), 5. Western, in Northern & Western region; 6. South East 7. South West 8. Mid West, in Southern region

<sup>29</sup> European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) - regional and urban development; European Social Fund (ESF) – social inclusion and good governance; Northern and Western region – economic convergence by less-developed regions; European Maritime Fisheries Fund; European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD); <http://www.southernassembly.ie/resources/faqs>

Figure 14: NUTS2 regions in January 2015



Figure 15: Examples and good practice areas (Eastern Midland Regional Assembly, 2016)



The region is sub-divided into three Strategic Planning Areas (SPAs) and separate strategic planning area committees have been established in respect of each strategic planning area within the region. The membership of an Assembly is predominantly nominated by local authorities to represent the region. These committees are set up to assist the Assembly with

the development of policy and advise the Assembly generally on matters in relation to regional spatial and economic strategy at a sub-regional level (Southern Regional Assembly, 2017)

The Regional Assemblies focus on preparation and implementation of Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs), integration of Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs), management of EU Operational Programmes, EU project participation, implementation of national economic policy, and working with the National Oversight and Audit Commission (Eastern Midland Regional Assembly, 2017). They also assist to “source European funding for regional operation programmes, promote coordinated public services, monitor proposals that impact on their area and advise public bodies of the regional implications of their plans and policies” ( Department of Housing Planning and Local Government, 2017).

Regional assemblies prepare operational programmes<sup>30</sup> in the context of the

- Europe 2020 goals of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth
- Cohesion Policy 11 thematic objectives in particular 4-7 <sup>31</sup> due to funding conditions
- Strategic Framework for European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020
- EC Regional policy priorities

Table 3: New NUTS 2 regional structures for Ireland and dissolution of NUTS 3 authorities

<b>New structure January 2015</b> NUTS 2 & NUTS 3	<b>Old structure January 2015</b> NUTS 2 & NUTS 3	<b>Implications of the structural changes</b> NUTS 2 & NUTS 3
<p>Regional Assemblies (NUTS 2) create Regional Spatial &amp; Economic Strategy (RSES) and manage EU funding for EU projects.</p> <p>RSES preparation is instructed by the Minister of Housing Planning Community and Local Government.</p> <p>Information about its form and content is included in the Planning and Development Act 2016.</p> <p>RSES works with Local Economic Community</p>	<p>Regional Assemblies (NUTS 2) administer regional operational programmes.</p> <p>Before 2015 the role of regional assemblies was to consider “from time to time, the reviews of the development plans of local authorities in the region as carried out by the relevant regional authorities” (Grist, 2012).</p> <p>Before their dissolution in June 2014, regional authorities (NUTS 3) produced regional planning</p>	<p>RSES – the first time that spatial strategy and economic strategy are merged into one regional planning document.</p> <p>All RSES programmes are synchronised to Cohesion Policy thematic objectives for growth period 2014-2020 and to ERDF funded main priorities 1-4.</p> <p>There appears to be progress towards more compliance between national, regional and local level, if the draft National Planning Framework 2040</p>

<sup>30</sup> The Operational programme is a document which sets out the approved investment programme for the region which is co-funded by the EU and includes among other things investment priorities, financing plan and implementation arrangements. <http://www.southernassembly.ie/resources/faqs>

<sup>31</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/policy/how/priorities](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/how/priorities)



plans of local authorities within its region.  Regional authorities (NUTS 3) dissolved and staff transferred to regional assemblies (NUTS 2)  Regional Assemblies create Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASP) for regional cities within their region.	guidelines which until 2010 had very weak compliance order with local authority development plans.	is adopted and if it is supported by real economic budgets, political leadership and an 'all-government' buy-in.
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The new clustering brings the Midland region and a Border county into the Eastern Midland (Greater Dublin) region. The rationale for the new way the regions have been grouped is not clear (Riordan, 2017). One of the regional assembly websites state "...together the regional assemblies form a strong regional structure that strengthens the development of Ireland's regions in a coordinated, strategic manner..." (Northern and Western Regional Assembly, 2017). A noticeable change is the much improved accessibility to relevant content on EU funding on their websites – that show the connection between EU funds regional operational programmes, EU project funding INTERREG, LEADER, etc.

Within the regions the characteristics from one county to another differ widely, apart from the Northern and Western Region which is predominantly peripheral as a region with the exception of Galway city. Within the other two regions (Eastern Midland and Southern), there are pockets with characteristics of peripherality which include declining and aging population, lack of access to good quality infrastructure and new technologies and in particular to Ireland, an absence of a mechanism to remove bureaucratic barriers so that unique local programmes can be delivered to specific communities (O'Keefe, 2017). Both the Eastern Midland region and the Northern and Western region contain areas with the lowest average disposable income per person<sup>32</sup>.

The overall urban structure in Ireland is weak and balance of growth between the three regions is very poor. Regional cities like Cork and Galway are growing but at a very slow pace. (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2017). Both Cork and Dublin are similar in that they have two sides to them – one side is well educated, young thriving population, employment in IT, financial services or hi tech industry with global recognition and reach, while the other side has blackspots of population dependent on

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<sup>32</sup> The Border (€19,233) and Midland (€19,345) regional authority areas fared worst among the eight regions <http://www.southernassembly.ie/regional-planning/statistics>

diminishing public and civil services, housing under-provision, underemployment or unemployment confined by long standing geography of poverty (Cork Equal and Sustainable Communities Alliance (CESCA) , 2015)

As an island, the international airports and ports are key nodes of connectivity with Europe and the world and play a crucial part in the country’s competitiveness and future prospects. The key ports and airports are State owned commercial entities with the capacity to raise their own finance including loans directed through Cohesion Policy such as European Investment Bank (EIB) and Connecting Europe facility (CEF). Tier 1 ports like Dublin and Cork account for 80% of national port freight traffic, and their significance is indicated in the National Ports Policy and RSES (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2017). Following the National Development Plan (2000 – 2006) through Cohesion Funds, connectivity to Dublin from most regions improved considerably (McHenry, Western Development Commission, 2017). Connectivity between other regions requires strengthening to reduce dependency on the Dublin region.

The case study report spotlights 4 examples and 2 good practices in three NUTS 2 regions in Ireland to show the relationship between thematic issues of ‘peripheries and other specific regions’; ‘support for local economy’; ‘transport infrastructure and accessibility’, with spatial planning and territorial governance. Nine people were formally interviewed ranging from city council planners, representative of Dublin Airport Authority to animators, NGOs and academics involved in LEADER and INTERREG programmes (refer to Appendix 1 for list of interviewees).

*Table 4: Examples and Good practices in Ireland*

<b>Region</b>	<b>Peripheries and other specific regions</b>	<b>Support for local economy</b>	<b>Transport infrastructure and accessibility</b>	<b>Convergence objectives</b>
<b>Eastern Midland Region</b>	P	Ex	P	R
<b>Northern and Western</b>	Ex	Ex		R
<b>Southern</b>			Ex	R

*Ex - possible example to study, P – possible good practice to study, R - Regional competitiveness and employment*

## 2. General characteristics of the regions

### 2.1. Northern and Western Region

Figure 16: NUTS 2 Northern & Western region (Northern and Western Regional Assembly, 2017)



Designated 'European Entrepreneurial Region 2018' (Northern and Western Regional Assembly, 2017), the Northern and Western region is made up of two Strategic Planning Areas (SPAs), the Northern/Border and Western. Structural weakness is greatest in this region which has the highest percentage of rural population of 66.1% (McHenry, Western Development Commission, 2017) and the lowest per capita rates of projected population and jobs. Isolation is a key issue affecting many people in rural areas in Ireland through lack of physical or digital connection. Structured amenities within settlements are scarce within the Border region and the property market is under stress due to the oversupply of housing (during the economic boom) and high vacancy rates in town centres and suburbs (ADAS, 2017). Within the region, remote areas such as Connemara, Donegal and the Gaeltacht (Irish speaking) areas reveal signs of rural deprivation such as low educational and skill levels, unprofitable farm holdings, unemployment and high dependency rates. Galway is the exception showing an increase in population as an educational and manufacturing centre for the region (Teagasc, 2014). The region has a rural economy mainly based on the SME sector with a variety of strong indigenous businesses. Forestry is an important sector.

There is a national pattern of continual decline of rural areas and towns remote from large urban centres of population (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2017), and interregional connectivity is relatively poor (McHenry, Western Development Commission, 2017). The largest settlement in the region is Galway City with a population of 80,000, high population of students and designated to be the EU Capital of Culture 2020. It is proposed to be a regional city in line with the proposed National Planning Framework 2040 and EU JESSICA<sup>33</sup>. After Galway the next most populated settlement in the region is Sligo with a population of approximately 20,000. Although the country is experiencing an economic recovery, the recovery is largely focused in Dublin. The peripheral counties in this region such as Mayo, Sligo and Donegal have experienced out migration and a reduction in population (Northern and Western Regional Assembly, 2017).

The border SPA has income levels below the State average (2004 -2013). Its average disposable income per person is €16,610, approximately 11% below the State average (Southern Regional Assembly, 2016).

The Northern and Western region is characterised by a high-quality environment, low levels of pollution, clean air and water and large stretches of clean beaches on the Western seaboard. The region has some of the most dramatic and varied landscapes with part of the Burren landscape, Atlantic coastline and largest tracts of Atlantic Blanket bog and Mountain Blanket Bog in Ireland. It contains 37% of natural heritage areas and 31% of national nature reserves. A high percentage of this region is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean which is an important ecosystem with potential to tap into the global marine market (biotechnology). The tourism sector in the Western area has been supported with projects like the Wild Atlantic Way and Blueways and there is a network of small and medium sized towns developing. Despite this the tourism sector performs poorly in the Border region – contributing only 7% (the lowest) of Ireland's total tourist revenue. The Border region has the highest number of holiday homes and a high percentage of vacancy rates 16.5%. In 2014 the border region had the lowest percentage of households with access to a PC (67.7%) (ADAS, 2017).

The North Western River Basin District which is in the Border region has 100% of ground water bodies in good ecological condition (ADAS, 2017). The Western SPA has one of Ireland's highest capacities to produce renewable energy using wind power and there has been a rapid increase in the uptake of renewable energy which has beneficial inter-connectors with Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the potential to have interconnectors with France (RAI 2014). However there is difficulty in gaining access to the energy grid for

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33 EU financial instrument that combines structural funds and EIB for investment in sustainable urban development projects <https://www.jessicafund.gr/index.php/about-jessica/how-it-works/?lang=en>

renewable energy developments. In general, there are concerns that energy usage by transport and industry relates to corresponding declines in economic activity (ADAS, 2017).

In 2014 the border region had the lowest level of employment of all the regions at 57.8% (ADAS, 2017). The Border SPA with €16,610 fared worst among the eight SPAs for average disposable income per person.

The Western SPA has an aging population and therefore large number of dependents.

In relation to tertiary education – the Western SPA has the highest number of 30-34 year old adults with tertiary education. However, the Border SPA has one of the lowest number of 30-34 year olds with tertiary education.

*Table 5: The Northern & Western regions -one of the three regions (NUTS 2) established January 2015*

<b>New structure January 2015 NUTS 2 &amp; NUTS 3</b>	<b>Old structure January 2015 NUTS 2 &amp; NUTS 3</b>	<b>Implications of the structural changes NUTS 2 &amp; NUTS 3</b>
<p>Newly formed NUTS 2, Northern and Western region administered by Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA)</p> <p>NUTS 3: reduced to 2 Strategic Planning Areas (SPAs) under a regional assembly. Regional authorities dissolved (June 2014).</p> <p>Regional assembly responsible for RSES for the region and MASP for Galway.</p>	<p>Formerly the Border, Midland and Western region administered by the Border Midland and Western region (BMW) Regional Assembly.</p> <p>NUTS 3: used to be 3 strategic planning areas under regional authorities.</p>	<p>Reduction in administrative areas within this region. There are 2 Strategic Planning Areas in the region.</p> <p>Regional authorities dissolved and regional assemblies become competently stronger with more influence on different spatial levels</p> <p>The 'Midland' Strategic Planning Area NUTS 3 is brought together in the Eastern Midland Region (containing the Greater Dublin Area GDA region)</p> <p>County Louth, LAU 1 is grouped into the Eastern Midland region.</p>

## 2.2. Eastern Midland Region

Figure 17: Eastern Midland Region showing three NUTS 3 strategic planning areas Dublin, Eastern and Midlands (Eastern Midland Regional Assembly, 2017).



The Eastern Midland Region is made up of 3 Strategic Planning Areas Midland, Eastern and Dublin. It is the most productive and competitive of the three regions, hosting half of all national employment. However, there are severe intra- regional disparities between the Midland and Dublin SPAs. The Dublin SPA is Ireland's global economic engine and the only area with higher per capita disposable income than the State average in the 2004-2013 period. The Midland, Border and West (Northern and Western Region) continuously earned less (Southern Regional Assembly, 2016). Greater Dublin Area (GDA) has 39% of the population<sup>34</sup> supported by global industries and services while County Offaly which is in the Midland, is post-industrial, rural and remote in terms of connectivity and investment. However, both the Midland and Dublin SPAs contain pockets of high index deprivation within them<sup>35</sup>.

Comparing regions in Ireland, Gross value added (GVA)<sup>36</sup> is lowest in the Midland, 3.6% and highest in Dublin, 42.1%. The Midland SPA display higher levels of consistent poverty and unemployment compared to the Dublin and Eastern SPA (Eastern Midland Regional Assembly, 2017). It had the lowest level of SMEs per head compared to other SPAs and lowest number of businesses larger than SMEs (only 4). It has the lowest percentage of people with access to the internet at 11.6% (ADAS, 2017). The Midland SPA with a greater

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<sup>34</sup> The Greater Dublin Area has a population of 1.8 million<sup>34</sup> (Dublin Chamber of Commerce, 2017), which is approximately 9 times more populated than the next largest city Cork, giving it the status of primate city.

<sup>35</sup>Based on Trutz Haase deprivation index - Louth, Dublin, Offaly, South Dublin (Eastern Midland Regional Assembly, 2017).

<sup>36</sup> Gross Value Added (GVA) – a measure of the difference between output and immediate consumption (Eastern Midland Regional Assembly, 2017).

reliance on employment in the agri-business leaves the region potentially vulnerable to the effects of Brexit.

The Eastern SPA has the highest levels of commuting to the Dublin metropolitan area. It is characterised by an urban-rural split – with urbanising areas either close to or with good accessibility to Dublin and low population and employment densities in more rural peripheral areas. Rural ‘one-off’ housing is a feature of the region. Rural depopulation occurred in the more peripheral areas, of this region, such as in the Midland – County Offaly. The chronic undersupply of affordable housing in Dublin linked to infrastructure deficiencies has led to problematic trend for counter urbanisation, homelessness and poorly managed growth in peri-urban and rural areas in the Eastern SPA and outside Dublin city. This has also led to the dominance of the private motorcar in the region.

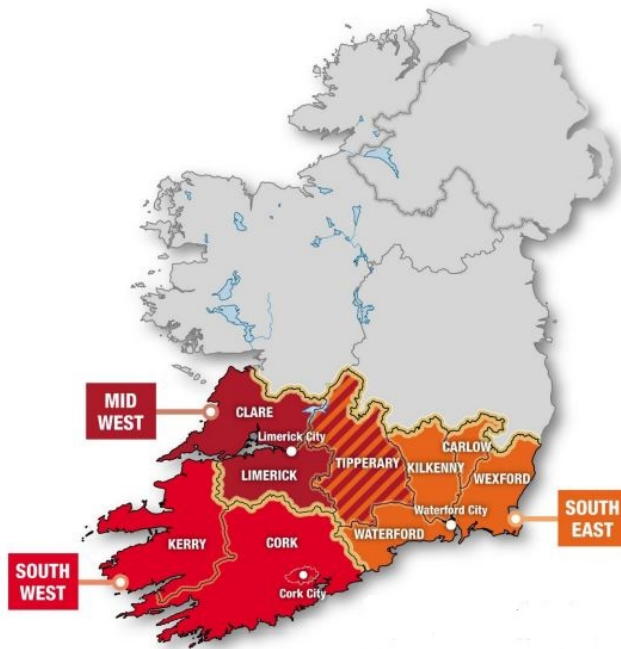
Within the Dublin region, Dublin Airport is one of the fastest growing in Europe in terms of passenger numbers, and there is continued growth in international exports through Dublin Port. A robust enterprise base of traditional and emerging sectors and a highly skilled labour force has attracted FDI and Multinational Enterprises (MNEs). While the GDA is a hub for FDI and Multinational enterprises, local enterprise and SMEs provide the largest share of employment with the Eastern and Midland SPAs having the highest share of micro enterprises (Eastern Midland Regional Assembly, 2017).

*Table 6: The Eastern Midland Region - one of the three regions (NUTS 2) established January 2015*

<b>New structure January 2015 NUTS 2 &amp; NUTS 3</b>	<b>Old structure January 2015 NUTS 2 &amp; NUTS 3</b>	<b>Implications of the structural changes NUTS 2 &amp; NUTS 3</b>
<p>Newly formed NUTS 2, Eastern Midland region administered by Eastern Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA)</p> <p>NUTS 3: re grouped to 3 Strategic Planning Areas (SPAs) under regional assemblies. Regional authorities dissolved (June 2014).</p> <p>Regional assembly responsible for RSES for the region and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans MASP for Dublin</p>	<p>Formerly the Southern and Eastern region administered by the Southern and Eastern region (BMW) Regional Assembly.</p> <p>NUTS 3: used to be 5 strategic planning areas under regional authorities.</p>	<p>Regional authorities dissolved and regional assemblies become competently stronger with more influence on different spatial levels</p> <p>The ‘Midland’ Strategic Planning Area (SPA) NUTS 3 forms part of the Eastern Midland region. There are 3 SPAs in the region.</p> <p>County Louth, LAU 1 forms part of the Eastern Midland region.</p> <p>Southern SPAs re-grouped into Southern Region (NUTS 2)</p>

## 2.3. Southern Region

Figure 18: Southern Region showing three NUTS strategic planning areas South West, Mid West and South East (Southern Regional Assembly, 2017).



The Southern Region is composed of 3 Strategic Planning Areas South West, Mid West and South East. It contains three regional cities<sup>37</sup> including Cork which is the second largest in Ireland. The cities and suburbs account for 22% of the region's total population. Together with Dublin the Mid West SPA had an average disposable income per person higher than the state average (€19,514 in 2012) (Southern Regional Assembly, 2016). Even though 62,000 new jobs were created in the last 5 years, growth as a regional economic engine is slow when compared to Dublin. Inward migration and stimulation are required to attract diverse people and enterprise to make them competitive internationally, nationally and regionally.

Rural economy is supported by high agricultural yields and strong food processing capabilities. The rural economic sector has potential growth in agriculture diversification, marine, forestry, tourism, energy and the green economy. There are some areas of strong networks of towns and villages in the rural landscape however there are many settlements that are remote due to the landscape. Like its urban economy, stimulation for growth and diversity is needed with one form of potential diversification in the rural economy being

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<sup>37</sup> Regional cities are identified as regional drivers of growth (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2017).



renewable energy. The region is a net energy exporter however community energy companies still face barriers accessing the energy grid.

The region has an extensive coastline with significant potential for the global marine market. Two tier 1 ports of national significance are Cork and Shannon Foynes in Limerick. As the port of Cork is a TEN-T port, connected to the core European rail and road network, it has availed of funding facilities through the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for its expansion (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2013).

*Table 7: The Southern Region - one of the three regions (NUTS 2) established January 2015*

<b>New structure on January 2015 NUTS 2 &amp; NUTS 3</b>	<b>Old structure before January 2015 NUTS 2 &amp; NUTS 3</b>	<b>Implications of the structural changes NUTS 2 &amp; NUTS 3</b>
<p>Newly formed NUTS 2, Southern region administered by Southern Regional Assembly (EMRA)</p> <p>NUTS 3: re grouped to 3 Strategic Planning Areas (SPAs) under regional assemblies. Regional authorities dissolved (June 2014).</p> <p>Regional assembly responsible for RSES for the region and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans MASP for Cork, Limerick and Waterford.</p>	<p>Formerly the Southern and Eastern region administered by the Southern and Eastern region (BMW) Regional Assembly.</p> <p>NUTS 3: used to be 5 strategic planning areas under regional authorities.</p>	<p>Regional authorities dissolved and regional assemblies become competently stronger with more influence on different spatial levels.</p> <p>There are 3 Strategic Planning Areas NUTS 3 that form part of the Southern region.</p>

### **3. General overview of thematic issues in country**

#### **3.1. Transport Infrastructure and accessibility**

The thematic issues are:

- Traffic congestion in the Greater Dublin Area in particular the ring road (M50) on the periphery of Dublin
- Public transport - rail, metro (LUAS) and bus
- Connectivity to rest of Europe and world through airport and ports
- Active transportation – cycling and walking and health
- Connected issues of urban sprawl, GHG emissions and quality of life

Through Cohesion policy and the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006 (NDP 2000), Ireland invested in road infrastructure connecting the different regional cities with Dublin and improved accessibility to rural areas. During the economic boom, despite County and City Councils' policy of clustering new development within or in close proximity to existing towns and villages, many new housing estates and individual houses were built on the outskirts of urban centres or in the neighbouring countryside. The landscape has been altered by urban sprawl in mainly low densities at various locations (Teagasc, 2014).

As Dublin continues to grow as a major economic engine the issues of dispersed development of the region, low density cities which are uneconomical for high capacity public transport and inconsistent funding (due to the economic crisis) for public transport developments are ongoing challenges. Traffic congestion and trips increase as the economic recovery improves (Graham, 2017). In response to the transport issues in the Dublin and Eastern regions, the National Transport Authority was formed in 2009 to produce transport strategy for the Greater Dublin Area.

Monocentric development of other smaller regional cities echo similar issues in Dublin at a smaller scale. Market led residential development in the suburbs leads to movement of labour force from dormitory towns to cities leading to traffic congestion at peak times and increased GHG emissions. Long term challenges exist in terms of retro fitting sustainable design into existing developments and roads and how to change behaviour towards more sustainable private transport.

Delivery of public transport and improving networks, narrowed in scope during the economic crisis, creating a significant lag in its implementation as it is demand forecast led and relies on economic capacity. Currently there are completed developments awaiting infrastructure such as Metro North, Dublin (Fallon, 2017) or incomplete developments with public transport infrastructure such as Adamstown, South Dublin. The legacy of the economic boom which are urban sprawl, and transition to a more service oriented economy (located in urban centres or urban fringes) contribute to longer commuting distances and a car dominated transport system (EPA, 2011).

Rail connection between Cork - Dublin - Belfast was implemented through TEN-T and national motorways through the NDP 2000-2006. However there are high costs of connecting inter-regional rail and bus services with rural towns due to the low populations served. An estimated 45% of rural district electoral divisions in Ireland have a minimal level of scheduled public transport service. In particular, a dispersed settlement pattern and one-off housing exacerbate the issue (EPA, 2011).

Major investment and expansion were undertaken in Dublin airport and upgrading of Tier 1 ports directed through Cohesion policy in the form of loans from European Investment Bank (EIB) and connecting Europe Facility (CEF). Issues regarding the environment, habitats and biodiversity dictated their scale of expansion. During the economic crisis there was a shift in attitude towards active transportation. This was matched by National Transport Strategy and Local Authority led with bike share schemes, cycle lanes and inclusion of the concept of green infrastructure and the connected (walkable) city in the development plans of Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway, which aligns with Cohesion Fund objective 7<sup>38</sup>.

The National Spatial Strategy (2002 -2020) and Regional Planning Guidelines were not effective in implementing balanced regional development or creating critical mass outside the Greater Dublin Area (EPA, 2011).

The newly proposed Regional Spatial & Economic Strategies (issues paper phase) for the new NUTS 2 regions and proposed National Planning Framework 2040 (draft consultation phase) provides more evidence based data and mapping that links regional investment priorities with capital investment (Northern and Western Regional Assembly, 2017) (The Irish Times, 2015) (Nolan, 2016).

### **3.2. Peripheries and other specific regions**

Ireland is the most rural of the EU27 countries for both population and land area <sup>39</sup>under the OECD definition. 70.5% of the State population is predominantly rural and the Northern and Western region is the most rural region<sup>40</sup> (McHenry, Western Development Commission,

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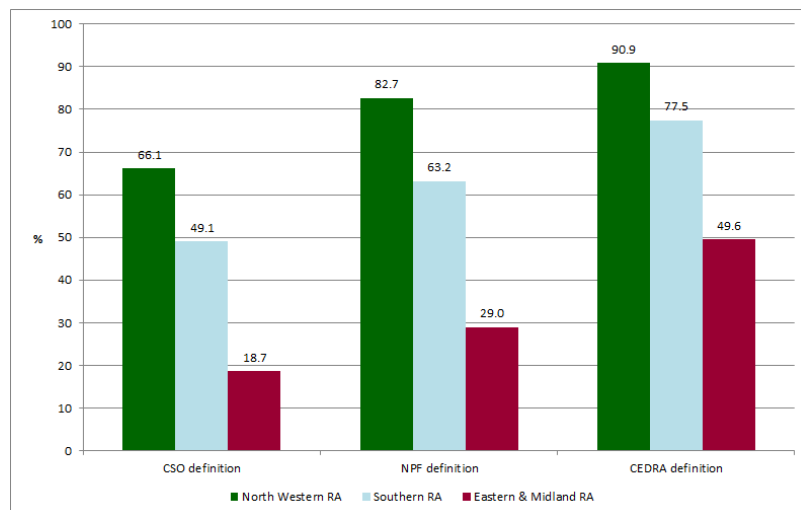
38 Objective 7 – Promoting sustainable transport and improving network infrastructures

39 The OECD methodology classifies local administrative units level 2 with a population density below 150 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> as rural. For more information on the definition [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Urban-rural\\_typology](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Urban-rural_typology)

40 The Northern and Western region is the most rural, with at least two thirds of its population classified as rural in the narrowest definition. The Eastern Midland region using the broadest definition, has less than half its population defined as rural. (Depending on which type of definition of rural is used) <http://www.wdc.ie/category/wdc-insights/population/>

2017). Most of the populated coastal islands in the State are in the western region and 80% of dwellers live on western region islands (McHenry, Western Development Commission Insights- island life, 2017).

Figure 19: Comparison of rural regions in the three regions.



Northern and Western Region, Southern Region and Eastern midland region under different definitions of rural (CSO, NPF and CEDRA) showing the Northern and Western region as the most rural region between (66.1%, 82.7% or 90.9%) (McHenry, Western Development Commission Insights – what is rural?, 2017).

Communities in peripheral, remote areas in Ireland historically suffered extensively from a major decline in both population and economic activity during the period of British colonialism (Brennan, Flint, & Luloff, 2009). Since independence in the 1920s these areas have lagged behind economically in comparison to the Mid West and Eastern parts of Ireland. Many peripheral areas in the Midlands, Western, Northern (Border) regions did not directly benefit from the economic boom of the 1990s. While the population<sup>41</sup> of the State has grown 3.7% from 2011-2016, rural and peripheral areas in every county continued to experience significant population decline (Gleeson, 2016). These give rise to issues such as reduction of service delivery (post offices, police stations), a high old age cohort, less young people and reduced transport connectivity contributing to isolation.

The Pobal Deprivation Index reveals that the places worst hit by recession and post-recession (2006-2016) years were small rural towns (population of 1,000 to 5,000) (Ni Aodha, 2017). Past patterns of shortcomings in state support, funding and political representation towards these areas exist (Brennan2009). Decades of marginalisation have prompted several rural communities to take charge of their own development fortunes. As a result, there are high levels of innovation, entrepreneurship and a ‘can-do’ attitude and Ireland is characterised by a

<sup>41</sup> Population of Ireland is 4,757,976 (CSO 2016)

high number of community-led or bottom-up initiatives (Teagasc, 2014). The region is therefore characterised by local independent cultures with a sense of self-reliance and 'Necessity' entrepreneurship<sup>42</sup> (Brennan, Flint, & Luloff, 2009).

Key challenges are employment and re-skilling, and re-structuring the nature of employment ( Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas , 2017). SMEs tend to be small with a high number of microenterprises and a high percentage of one-person businesses. Management skills in human resources, marketing and finance tend to be poor. Therefore support networks and rural enterprise policy specific to these types of enterprises in peripheral areas are important (Teagasc, 2014).

The Irish Government set up Udaras na Gaeltachta to promote industry in the Irish speaking areas and Industrial Development Agency (IDA) to promote the region as environments for FDI investment and multinational hubs that support a good quality of life. Quasi-governmental / independent agencies such as the Western Development Commission support grass roots development, place based projects through research and development along with EU programmes including INTERREG LEADER and PEACE. Other supports include Enterprise Ireland, Shannon development, Science Foundation Ireland, Teagasc, Failte ireland, Local Enterprise Offices<sup>43</sup>, Community Enterprise centres; Bord Bia (Food Board) and Bord Iascaigh Mhara - Irish Seafood Development Agency (Bord Iascaigh Mhara , 2017). These link to European level networks such as EUGO and SOLVIT.

One of the latest government backed programmes is the Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) emerging from the Commission for Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA). These are functional areas rather than administrative geographic areas. The zones are defined at sub county level where people live and work reflecting spatial patterns of local economic activities and development. By focusing on functional areas, bottom up integrated zones are created. This facilitates locally prepared plans which leverage government support through government taskforces and agencies. 52 projects were allocated a total 3.7 million in 2015 and in 2016, 5.3 million was invested in 41 projects.

Another recent initiative is establishment of a national taskforce to improve broadband and mobile coverage in the short term until the roll out of the National Broadband Plan. This support is vital for rural SME expansion in terms of network activity and connectivity of rural Ireland to Europe (Irish Government News Service, 2016).

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42 'Necessity' entrepreneurs have a different perception of entrepreneurship or business ownership than do 'opportunity' entrepreneurs. They pursue enterprise opportunities, out of necessity rather than opportunity (Teagasc, 2014).

43 Funded through Cohesion Policy ERDF

As part of the region's designation as the European Entrepreneurial Region the NWRA director stated that the traditionally marginalised area had an opportunity to emerge stronger and more attractive as a place to live and work for young people (Western Development Commission, 2017).

### **3.3. Support for local economy**

The past experience in Ireland of economic development was focused on national or regional levels, with a minor role at local community level. The national policy so far spotlighted jobs growth in urban areas. Foreign direct investment, accounts for much of the recent employment creation, and state assisted employment is increasingly concentrated in the regional cities or large towns (Teagasc, 2014). National Spatial Strategy referred to balanced regional development however it was very strategic and economic, investment and delivery issues were not harnessed alongside. County/City development plans provided details on location of economic activity in zoning plans. Economic factors were not part of the development plans.

During the Irish economic crisis employment in the construction, retail and personal services sectors reduced significantly. After the crisis, many ways of working have emerged including pop ups, start-ups, working from home and innovation hubs. In 2010, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) represented 99.8 per cent of active enterprises in Ireland, accounting for nearly 195,000 businesses (all figures from CSO, 2012). 69.1 per cent of those employed in Ireland work in small or medium sized businesses, representing over 850,000 workers. The Plato network, governed by IBEC (national employers' organisation) and the Chamber of Commerce of Ireland, provides SMEs with discussion forums and networking events as well as the possibility for company founders be mentored by experienced entrepreneurs. They facilitate government funded programmes to ensure that Irish industry is incentivised to train and upskill employees professional skills to international standards (Teagasc, 2014).

Skillnets is an enterprise-led support agency, operating training networks to enhance the skills of people in employment in to improve competitiveness and employability in the Irish industry. As part of the Putting People First Strategy and Local Government Act 2014, Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) were established within local authorities for local enterprise and development and provide courses, funding and mentoring for new start-ups.

As agriculture in Ireland declines in importance, rural areas have become increasingly reliant on other sources of income<sup>44</sup>. Therefore fostering economic diversification and development in rural areas is vital. Both rural and community enterprises relied heavily on European

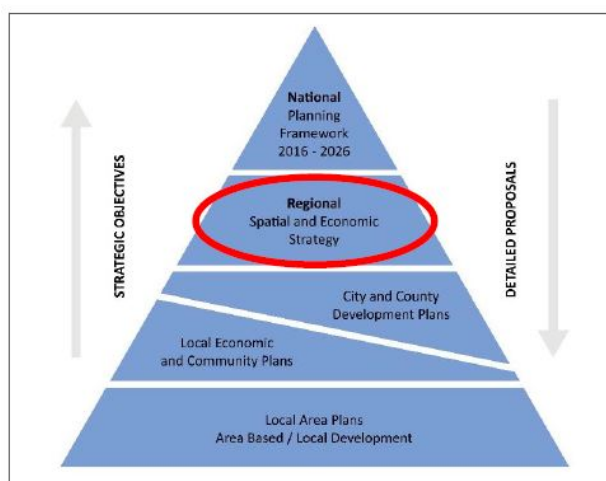
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<sup>44</sup> In Ireland, agriculture and related sectors employed more than half the workforce in the 1950s. In 2012, employment in agriculture stands 4.7% of the workforce and contributes 1.2% of GDP (DAFM, 2013) (Teagasc, 2014).

Cohesion Policy programmes such as LEADER, INTERREG and PEACE. Until 2014 these programmes were implemented in a way that recognised the significance of local culture and its unique role in the process of community development.

Clustering projects together for example the Great Western Greenway that has become a tourism trail supporting small businesses in hospitality and food. These projects receive support from Failte Ireland (Tourism Board), Bord Bia (Food Board), LEADER<sup>45</sup> and regional tourism authorities. However collaboration between agencies at different levels could be significantly improved to create policy, promote rural tourism and maintain tourism infrastructure (Teagasc, 2014).

Figure 20: New structure, spatial planning instruments and position of RSES, LECP and proposed National Planning Framework



Subsidies from CAP helped to maintain agriculture and brought structural change in the sector. While FDI has supported local economy in more urban areas in terms of agglomeration and support businesses, attracting a labour force from Europe. The SME food sector is growing such as micro- breweries and food cottage industries, however, they face many difficulties in upscaling and operation. Local economic development face significant challenges in peripheral, rural and post- industrial rural areas.

In 2016 as part of the restructuring, a new intervention, the Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs) were launched. They work alongside the City and County development plans (LAU1) in a “shared but separate process”. The LECPs shall also relate to measures under the Action Plan for Jobs, report of the commission for the Economic development of Rural areas (CEDRA). The Regional assemblies access the projects and programmes of the LECP

<sup>45</sup> LEADER facilitates network development through a range of types of assistance that add value to local products, such as, support for business networks, collective marketing, local branding initiatives and social and information networks for local communities (Teagasc, 2014).

to ... relative to the high level EU2020 targets<sup>46</sup> laid out in the National Reform programme for Ireland (Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2015).

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 provided for a more central role for local government in economic and community development – contributing to achieving the aim in the Action Programme for Effective Local Government, “... that local government will be the main vehicle of governance and public service at local level, leading economic, social and community development” (Fingal County Council , 2015).

The LECPs are prepared by the local authority and the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC). The economic element is developed by the local authority and the community element prepared by the LCDC. Through collaboration between the local authority and community committee, the plan sets out “...objectives and actions to promote and support the economic development and local community development of LAU 1 territories. They include themes that align with Cohesion Policy (ERDF and ESF) priorities and are Enterprise and Employment; Learning, Training and Working; Well-being and Social Inclusion (also in line with the National Action Plan for social inclusion); Leadership and Community Empowerment; Tourism, Environment and Heritage; Urban Towns and Rural Communities (Fingal County Council, 2016).

Table 8: Level of Importance of each issue and impact of Cohesion Policy

Thematic Issues	National		Regional		Local	
	Level of importance	Impact of cohesion policy	Level of importance	Impact of cohesion policy	Level of importance	Impact of cohesion policy
Peripheries and other specific regions	1-2	2	2-3 Depending on the type of agency involved	2-3 Depending on the type of agency involved	2-3	2-3
Support for local economy	1	1-2	2	2	3	2-3
Transport infrastructure and accessibility	3	3	3	3	1-2 Depending on the type of local level	1

**3 = strong importance/impact** (e.g.: explicit reference to the aim/objective in main domestic territorial governance and spatial planning documents, clear implication for policy development and perceivable practical impacts)

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46 Ireland’s EU2020 Targets – Employment; Research & Development, Climate Change and Energy; Early school Leaving and Tertiary Education; Poverty Reduction



**2 = moderate importance/impact** (e.g.: explicit/implicit reference to the aim/objective into some domestic territorial governance and spatial planning documents, partial implications in policy and practice)

**1 = little importance/impact** (e.g.: discussion in domestic discourses, that does not produce any actual impact in the practice)

The LECP however, is not an operational plan. It is designed to work between and across strategic and operational plans of other agencies by identifying and implementing integrated actions, ensuring coherent actions between agencies (Fingal County Council, 2015).

Therefore the LECP is delivered by those agencies and the local authority. It is intended to be consistent with the core strategy and objectives of local development plans, aligned with the SEA directive and article 6 of the Habitats Directive. The relevant regional assembly ensures the consistency of the LECP with the local development plan. The responsibility of local development strategy, LEADER programmes and Social Activation Programme rests with the LCDC.

*Table 9: Thematic issues, examples, good practices, regions, characteristic, Cohesion Policy instrument +other instruments*

<b>Peripheries and other specific regions</b>		<b>Support for local economy</b>		<b>Transport infrastructure and accessibility</b>	
Example	Good Practice	Example	Example	Example	Good Practice
Bioenergy deployment  2012-2014	Community Development  2001	Alliance of Transnational Rural Communities 2010-2015	Regeneration  2004 - present	International Port Redevelopment and Extension 2015-2018	International Airport  2010
Northern & Western Region	East Midland Region	Southern Region	East Midland Region	Southern Region	East Midland Region
Remote - Rural	Post Industrial-Rural	Remote - Rural	Outer City - High deprivation	City Harbour	Global City
Cohesion Policy through INTERREG IVB Northern Periphery Programme	Cohesion Policy through LEADER +	Cohesion Policy through INTERREG IVB North West European Programme	Cohesion Policy through National Development Plan in tandem with LIFE+ WISER	Cohesion Policy through National Development Plan in tandem with Connecting Europe Facility and TEN-T	Cohesion Policy through National Development Plan in tandem with European Investment Bank- EIB
Convergence objectives: Regional competitiveness					

## 4. Peripheries and Specific Regions in the Northern and Western Region

### Bioenergy Proliferation and Deployment

#### 4.1. Thematic issues problems

In January 2014 the EU commission referred Ireland to the Court of Justice of the European Union for failure to fully transpose the 2009 Renewable Energy Directive<sup>47</sup> (European Commission, 2014). Under the Directive at least 16% <sup>48</sup>of all energy consumed must be from renewable resources by 2020. Ireland's targets are 40% from renewable electricity, 12% from renewable heat and 10% from the renewable transport sector. Each Member State is to adopt a National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP)<sup>49</sup> (SEAI, 2016).

Part of the directive 2009/28/EC, states that production of energy from renewable sources frequently relies on local or regional SMEs. In addition, structural funding should be used to produce local renewable energy and regional development initiatives (Directive 2009/28/EC).

Estimates by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)<sup>50</sup> show that current policies will not deliver 12% renewable energy in the heat sector by 2020. The estimated shortfall will be in the region of 2 to 4 percentage points of the 12% (Department of Communications, Climate Action and Energy , 2014).

Developing local energy markets in peripheral areas could contribute to closing the gap. Furthermore, it could improve energy security while stimulating and promoting a circular economy in peripheral areas that are abundant in biomass and wood crops (McHenry, Submission Reponse to Consultation on Renewable Heat Incentive Technology Review from Western Development Commission, 2017). International policy experience (OECD, 2012) recommended that while renewable energy is an opportunity for stimulating economic growth in hosting communities it also requires "a complex and flexible policy framework and a long

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47 The EU Directive 2009/28/EC promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources

48 The target for Ireland in the Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of use of energy from renewable sources is a 16% share of renewable energy in Cross Final Consumption (GFC) by 2020

49 These sectoral targets are RES-E (electricity), RES-T (transport) and RES-H (heat) respectively. The contribution from renewables in 1990 was 2.3%, rising to 9.1% of GFC (Gross Final Consumption) in 2015

50 The National Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland (SEAI) is the government agency with an advisory role that provides research and policy analysis on renewable energy, GHG emissions and energy efficiency. <https://www.seai.ie/resources/publications/Bioenergy-Supply-in-Ireland-2015-2035.pdf>

term strategy". Renewable energy deployment can benefit rural areas with new jobs and business opportunities when a large number of actors are involved and when the activity is embedded in the local economy (OECD, 2012). Developing renewable local energy supply would also help to deliver on the National Climate Change Strategy, Waste Framework Directive (through land fill diversion and waste to energy) and provide options for rural diversification.

#### **4.2. Relationship between cohesion policy spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

The Commission proposed binding targets to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 40% in 2030 (relative to emissions in 1990) and for energy consumed to comprise at least 27% from renewable resources. In line with Cohesion policy 2014-2020 objectives of promoting climate change adaptation and a low carbon economy, recent changes have occurred in government departments in 2016. Climate Action<sup>51</sup> is a new portfolio added to the Communications and Environment Department and a white paper has been produced, 'Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Future' 2015 -2030.

Furthermore all the newly restructured regional assemblies apportion a high percentage of their funds towards thematic issues in Cohesion Policy. The focus of the Operational Programme of the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NUTS 2) is collaboration, competitiveness and better places in line with Cohesion Policy and priorities of EC Regional policy. In the Northern and Western region, the ERDF and Irish government co-fund €320 million. As the region is classified as a more developed region, at least 80% of the ERDF allocation has to focus on the first four thematic issues:

- Information Communication technologies (ICT)
- Research and technology development and innovation (RTDI)
- Competitiveness in Small Medium enterprise (SME)
- Low Carbon Economy (*ADAS, 2017*)

Approximately 3.5% of the energy used in Ireland comes from Irish grown biomass and there is potential for this to increase (SEAI, 2015). If cultivated in the right way, Irish grown biomass could supply 30% of the equivalent of 2015 energy demand. Forestry is a high potential growth sector for energy with the possibility to expand at the current market prices. The long term government vision for Ireland's energy system is to reduce GHG from the energy sector by between 80% and 95% compared with 1990 levels in 2050 (Western Development Commission, 2012).

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<sup>51</sup> The Environment portfolio has been re-named and clustered with Communications, **Climate Action** and Environment

Bioenergy fuels are important in the Northern and Western region because of the climatic conditions of the region that are suitable to forestry growth and energy crops. Agricultural traditions are already in place that can be transferred to take advantage of bioenergy opportunities. Waste management solutions can be developed using bioenergy technology fulfilling the requirement for heat as a renewable energy source and reducing landfill. The Western Development Commission (WDC) is a regional agency that works with counties along the North Atlantic Corridor of Ireland, in partnership with local agencies and support from the regional assembly. The WDC worked on a series of European funded INTERREG IVB programmes researching and developing the potential of bioenergy in the region (renewable heat incentive –policy). Following this, the NWRA Draft Issue papers have indicated that energy is an emerging sector in the region. (NWRA Issues paper 2017). Bioenergy is the best option for delivering heat in the Northern and Western region as most of the region is off the gas network (Western Development Commission, 2012).

During the Irish recession, when resources for research and development were extremely limited in the country, the WDC were partners in a series of INTERREG bioenergy projects. Each project fostered relationships between partners and allowed new issues to emerge, which subsequently influenced the next generation of projects. RASLRES (2009-2012)<sup>52</sup> was aimed at increasing the deployment of biomass in rural communities and grow the number of local businesses involved in the sector. A bioenergy strategy was prepared and the WDC played a key role in the Irish Bioenergy steering group for Renewable Heat Ireland. They were then invited to make submissions for the consultation on the draft National Policy Paper for Renewable Heat Incentive.

WDC led and collaborated on a project called BioPAD <sup>53</sup>between 2012 and 2014, funded under the INTERREG IVB Northern Periphery Programme (NPP). The consortium<sup>54</sup> investigated links between supply and demand, focusing on supply chains for bioenergy fuels and different methods of conversion into sustainable energy. A wider use of bioenergy was promoted in the region and an awareness of opportunities in the sector increased.

Based on their experience on RASLRES and BioPAD the WDC were invited by the Regional Authority to replace them and participate in an EU FP7<sup>55</sup> project called ROKWOOD (2012-

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52 Regional Approaches to Stimulating Local Renewable Energy Solutions (RASLRES) <http://www.raslres.eu/>

53 The aim was to promote the wider use of bioenergy and develop applications that would enhance the process from fuel source (wood crops) to energy provision (renewable heat).

54 Its partners were METLA Finnish Forest Research Institute, Environmental Research Institute Scotland, Action Renewables in Northern Ireland and a further 11 associate partners (BioPAD, 2012).

55 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme which was one of Cohesion Policy programmes

2015). The Regional Authority withdrew from the project consortium citing resource and time issues as it was about to be dissolved (due to the Local Government Act 2014). As the WDC were agile, they added value to the project through their research and experience. They networked with European partners and build capacity within their own organisation. WDC have since partnered with a few organisations from the ROKWOOD project to create a new project on Community Energy within the region.

Through the INTERREG programmes, they identified the status of existing biomass supply chains across the region. Supply chains were mapped and informed policy frameworks in the Northern Periphery. Subsequently tools were developed for users to source and acquire locally produced biomass for a range of renewable energy technologies such as combined heat and power or anaerobic digestion. The project app called BISCUIT (BioPAD Supply Chain Unique Integrated Tool) connected 75 organisations with information on biomass, energy crops and wood. A further 300 members subscribe to the bioenergy newsletter.

During one of the projects, a lack of support for SMEs of bioenergy and renewable energy was identified. It kick-started another INTERREG project called GREBE56 (2015-2018) supporting small businesses and SMEs through a mentoring scheme (BioPAD, 2012).

The newly formed Northern and Western Regional Assembly are the national contact point for the Northern Periphery Programme and support agencies like WDC with applications on EU programmes. (BioPAD Research , 2017)

Deriving from their experience, the WDC contributed submissions to the Renewable Heat Incentive policy during the consultation of the Irish Draft Bioenergy Plan 2014. In October 2017 the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment announced that it planned to invest €7 million to facilitate the rollout of the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme in Ireland during 2018 (Bioenergy International, 2017).

Through European networks, different regions learn valuable lessons in terms of relationship between policy changes and incentives on employment. For example, schemes incentivising usage of the Renewable Heat Incentive in Northern Ireland were the subject of intense political controversy and scandal regarding misuse of public funds. This issue led to the collapse of government assembly in Northern Ireland. Sudden policy changes on grant aid for biomass boilers were made as a result. Bioenergy companies were not given enough time to adapt and employment in the sector was affected (Leonard, 2017).

### **4.3. Recommendation**

In peripheral areas, intermediate regional agencies like the WDC make a significant impact of actualising EU policy on renewable energy. As an agile research and development agency

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56 Generating Renewable Energy Business Enterprise (GREBE) <http://grebeproject.eu/news/>

they are able to respond to emerging issues on bioenergy and support both SMEs and micro enterprises in rural areas. The example shows the value of intermediate agencies, as they have direct experience of issues in the area as well as the drive to research and solve them. Based on their experience on other INTERREG projects, they had the necessary knowledge to replace the regional authority on one of the EU INTERREG bioenergy projects.

During the Irish recession, the drive to implement bioenergy policy in the region has been bottom-up instigated by intermediate agencies like WDC (through INTERREG programmes) ahead of the implementation of government policy on the directive. This reveals the significance of support from European programmes like INTERREG in peripheral areas for supporting local economy and innovative research. On the other hand, projects on the ground contribute insights to national policy making.

The implementation of bioenergy policies benefit from being place based. Working within functional areas with spatial policies is more effective than working within political regions or sectoral policies (OECD, 2012).

## **5. Support for Local Economy in the Southern Region**

### **Rural Alliances - South Kerry**

#### **5.1. Thematic issues problems**

The Southern Region (NUTS 2) contains the South West SPA which includes Cork and Kerry which have very different geographical terrain and socio economic profiles. Even though Kerry contains areas that are very rural (15 people/sqm), places within it differ geographically on a local level. Issues faced are specific to places and particular to the communities. There is need for public policy to be tailored to specific geographies within the Strategic Planning Areas on a sub county level (South Kerry Development Partnership , 2016).

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 created smaller units called Municipal Districts at local administration (LAU2) sub county level. On one hand this is regarded as a positive step in theory, as it brings local government closer to the citizen. On the other hand, on a practical level the municipal districts are not based on functional areas. Therefore, the issues faced within each of the municipal districts may be too diverse and scattered to deliver tailored solutions. One example is the South and West municipal district (Kerry) which is one of the largest and most diverse in Ireland. Translation of regional policy into smaller units in the centralised system (so that diverse rural communities benefit) is a challenge in these areas as a result of the high concentration of diverse communities (South Kerry Development Partnership , 2016).

The outgoing National Spatial strategy called for balanced regional development which failed for many reasons. There is now a growing gap between core and peripheral regions. The proposed NPF 2040 aligns with JESSICA focusing on regional cities as economic engines with trickle down effects for areas surrounding these urban centres. This spatial policy works well for settlements near cities. However during the recession, the austerity agenda and public services cuts, affected rural communities in a more stark way than urban areas. Therefore with the recovery, there is a need for “prioritising key strategic investments in peripheral locations” (South Kerry Development Partnership , 2016) to grow the relationship between rural vibrancy, public services and economic development. Although the new government backed Initiative REDZ programme states that it focuses on functional areas rather than administrative areas, the funding and decision-making are delivered through regional or local authorities which follow administrative boundaries. CEDRA – state that key challenges in rural ... are employment and re-skilling, and re-structuring the nature of employment ( Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas , 2017). Many rural areas in Kerry and Cork in the South West SPA of the Southern region are characterised by a high number of community-led or bottom-up initiatives with ‘Necessity’ entrepreneurship (Teagasc, 2014).

An example of one such community is located in South Kerry which characteristics are described as “high amenity landscape and structurally weak” (Walsh, 2007). Many of the small towns and villages suffer from a loss of “services, opportunities and access to amenities” (Tyler, 2015).

affecting their ability to sustain themselves economically and increasing the experience of isolation. Findings in the Rural Vibrancy report (O’Keefe, Rural Vibrancy in North West Europe- The Case of South Kerry, 2015), reveal that levels of service provision in most communities such as rural transport, health and social services, fall below the targets set by government under the National Spatial Strategy 2002, negatively impacting on communities.

## **5.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning and territorial governance in practice**

The linkage between Rural Development Policy and Agricultural Policy is low and they are in competition with each other in Ireland (Saraceno, 2002) In the past the main rural activity was farming however, the last 30 years have shown a change to modernisation and mixed economies when communities are provided with resources, expertise and bottom up approaches are encouraged (O’Keefe, 2015). This was catalysed by programmes like LEADER (part of CAP), INTERREG and PEACE. They are the interfaces that connect rural people to EU policy and the concept of Europe. The programmes have been very successful in Ireland as it facilitated local communities to decide exactly what their challenges were and to find solutions within their community for the long term instead of the ‘one size fits all’ policies that tends to come from a centralised government.

Under the Irish presidency (2013), Community-Led Local Development was placed at the core of legislation regarding Cohesion policy Investment, endorsed by the European Commission focusing on specific sub regional areas; community led action groups; integrated and multi sectoral area based local development strategies that encouraged innovation (O’Keefe, Rural Vibrancy in North West Europe- The Case of South Kerry, 2015)

However, the last restructuring of the planning system in Ireland brought about the Local Government Act 2014 which had an effect on local rural communities in two ways:

- it shifted the governance structure of LEADER where the convener used to be civil society to local government “...which could be understood as central government” (O’Keefe, 2017)
- re-proportioned a percentage of funds away from LEADER programme to Farming concerns (O’Keefe, 2015) 57

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57 The previous round of LEADER funding 2007-2013 - final spend on the programme was circa 370mill (during the Irish recession).The budget allocation for the current round of LEADER funding is 220-250 mill, a reduction of 40% (South Kerry Development Partnership , 2016).



The INTERREG<sup>58</sup> programme is different to LEADER in that it supports the local through promoting territorial cooperation between different regions and provides funding for staff on the ground to coordinate time and resources to deliver a project. One of its strands, IVB, the North West Europe programme, is about encouraging economic competitiveness and regionally balanced and sustainable development by capitalising on cooperation between key actors in the area.

These aims are supported by the Barca report 2009 that states a place based policy is the only sort of policy that is compatible with the EU's current stage of development and political integration. It further states that "multilevel governance and subsidiarity of tasks and not sectors, must be implemented through the widespread use of vertical and horizontal contracts" (CPRM, 2009).

Community-Led Local Development is delivered in many rural regions throughout North West Europe. This was reflected in the INTERREG IVB - Rural Alliances project (2010-2015) that took place during the recession (when there were cuts in resources for rural community development). 12 rural partnerships from Ireland, France, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands and the United Kingdom came together. They combined community values with enterprise principals to create a network of 70 rural alliances with collective knowledge on

- renewable energy
- rural transport services
- festivals
- tourism
- healthcare to vulnerable members of the community
- local food enterprises

They also produced a tool to audit and create viability and vibrancy in rural settlements (Rural Alliances, 2015).

The Rural Alliances project coordinator for South Kerry Development Partnership<sup>59</sup> (SKDP), DeBuitlear, 2017 stated

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<sup>58</sup> INTERREG IVB financed by the European Regional development Fund. INTERREG enables organisations such as South Kerry Development Partnership to develop ideas with consultation with communities and then present them for funding with a plan of how they will be implemented and outcomes delivered.

<sup>59</sup> South Kerry Development Partnership Ltd works with a very broad range of stakeholders, including individuals, communities, businesses, networks, cooperatives, government agencies and departments. It is a non-governmental organisation, legally established as a limited company with charitable status. The operation of South Kerry Development Partnership Ltd

*“A lot of the benefit comes from the fact that the INTERREG programme is transnational so communities in rural areas meet each other and recognise they are not alone in what they are facing - depopulation, rural isolation, transport issues and economic development. The issues are relevant in many areas in North West Europe. It provided an opportunity for the different communities and enterprises to look at what has been done, modify and implement them in their own regions to suit their particular local needs rather than having to re- invent the wheel. Initiatives in Ireland were transferred to other places ... it’s a two way street” (DeBuitlear, 2017).*

The Irish project ‘MacGilly Cuddy Reeks Mountain Access’<sup>60</sup> became a best practice guide for walking events and a ‘Walking Festival Toolkit’<sup>61</sup> was developed in collaboration with partners from Wales and Ireland (South Kerry Development Partnership , 2016). The project opened access to mountain trails across privately owned land in South Kerry. Collaborators included communities, farmers and landowners, local authority, the Department of Rural and Community development and Tourism Board (Bord Failte). The project was used as an example to present the case for rural needs and tailored investment to MEPs (DeBuitlear, 2017).

Community energy enterprise became a project idea in South Kerry as experienced partners highlighted opportunities for renewable energy and benefits of circular economy. However, a key barrier in scaling up community energy enterprises, is the voluntary structure that small communities lock themselves into (inadequate resources or dedicated staff to work full time to expand into a viable long-term business).

Despite the positive policy on renewable energy, there seemed to be barriers in Ireland for the implementation of community energy projects. DeBuitlear, 2017 stated that the big issue around energy was obtaining grid access for community groups. He added

*“It’s a complicated game process - hugely weighted in favour of companies and those with deep pockets who can afford to throw in 10, 15, 20 or more applications for licences and grid connections. They have the time and finances to develop them and*

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is overseen by a voluntary board of directors from the Community & Voluntary Sector, The Social Partners, Statutory Agencies and Local Government.

<sup>60</sup> The project led to a path audit which created training for a local workforce on specialist repair works on the mountain paths and path development funded by the Tourism Board. The opening up of the pathways resulted in 38,800 walkers (2015 and 2016) in the Reeks enhancing trade in 46 existing enterprises in the area.

<sup>61</sup> Walking Festival Toolkit <http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/communities/tourism/walking-festival-toolkit/>

*they can take a punt at throwing in a vast quantity of these in the hope of 1 or 2 of them being successful. Clearly that doesn't apply to community groups when volunteers are doing it because they simply don't have the human/financial resources and there's no way they can generate the potential investment required from the community to develop such a project, on the basis of something that may or may not happen based on one application for a grid connection. So the pitch is hugely weighted in favour of the commercial sector for the development of renewable energy in the country."*

In 2015 the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources published a white paper 62 Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030 (Department of Communications, 2015) stating that 'government will widen the opportunity for citizen participation in energy matters by supporting community participation in renewable energy projects ... developing mechanisms to allow communities receive payment for electricity... examining shared ownership opportunities for renewable energy projects in local communities'.

However in 2016 the SKDP was told by the Irish authorities that they could not provide grid connections for community groups, outside of the GATE process citing EU regulations and competition laws as reasons. Therefore, it was not possible to ring-fence a particular percentage of the grid connections for community schemes. DeBuitlear, 2017 said

*'Theoretically the idea may be to level the playing pitch but the effect is actually biased in favour of those with deep pockets. There is no way a community group can compete with a large company in terms of accessing grid connection. So in effect the community energy projects are excluded [...] on the one hand sustainable rural development is being promoted and on the other hand communities are*

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62 Ireland's transition to a low carbon energy future 2015-2030  
<https://www.dccae.gov.ie/documents/Energy%20White%20Paper%20-%20Dec%202015.pdf>  
Community Energy Projects

95. Community-level energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, using a range of technologies, will play an important role in the energy transition.

96. There will be opportunities for communities to collaborate, including with local government and energy agencies, to develop community energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

97. SEAI will continue to provide a range of supports to communities and homeowners in relation to the deployment of renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency projects, including training, advice and grant support.

*disempowered from being able to be sustainable due to the current regulations. Communities are willing to help themselves if empowered and enabled to do it. It should be very simple to put a derogation into EU competition law to enable national governments to ring fence a portion of grid connections specifically for rural communities without being in breach of EU regulation.'*

With the changes made by national government in funding structures, SKDP cannot provide the required match funding for INTERREG or other such EU funded projects as all SKDP's current funding has an element of ESF<sup>63</sup> channelled through it. This leads to a potential loss of EU funding and development opportunities for South Kerry. Therefore SKDP are currently working with the Department of Community and Rural Development to secure match funding for the INTERREG submission.

### **5.3. Recommendation**

The example spotlights the significance of rural community agencies in driving place based rural economic development. It demonstrates the value of the INTERREG programme as regions in similar situations transfer knowledge to one another.

It exposed the barrier that the competition regulation poses in terms of access to the grid for community enterprises. Exceptions may need to be made for rural enterprises that address spatial issues and increase economic development. It also revealed that more joined up action is required between government agencies - national regional and local, to facilitate community enterprises. As there are limits to what volunteers can find time to do, programmes like INTERREG are valuable, as it provides funding for local community advocates research the potential value and construction of a project, before applying for state aided grants.

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63 European Social Fund

## 6. Support for Local Economy in the Eastern Midland Region Rediscovery Centre - Dublin

### 6.1. Thematic issues problems

Ireland as a whole country was designated Objective 1<sup>64</sup> status up till 1999, when the EC accepted the proposal by the Irish government to split Ireland into two NUTS 2 regions for Objective 1 purpose<sup>65</sup> (MacFeely, Moloney, & Kenneally, 2011). Before 2000, planning in Ireland was concerned with national development rather than regional planning. Ireland had a legacy of centralisation of policy and senior administration with local government structures at county level (40-80,000 population on average) providing local infrastructure financed mainly from structural funds (Flatley, 1999). Support for local economy and development followed the concept of local area based strategic interventions, based on the partnership approach that worked on national level. Different interventions were used on areas with issues such as long term unemployment or lack of business/employment opportunities (Flatley, 1999). Spatial planning at regional level was not part of the planning system<sup>66</sup> and local authorities implemented policy directly from the government.

Between 1997 -2007, Ireland reached a high rate of economic growth that averaged nearly 6% yearly. The economic boom affected strong growth in the construction sector and household incomes increased. During this period, economic growth was coupled with growth in waste (from the construction sector and private consumption). There was heavy reliance on local landfill and waste was exported for recycling and disposal as there was no infrastructure for sustainable waste disposal. Eighty percent of total waste was sent abroad (OECD, 2009), while the cost of landfill disposal escalated 300% (between 1999-2002)<sup>67</sup>. The Waste

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64 Objective 1 in the 1990s was about supporting development in the less prosperous regions. There were different degrees of Objective 1 regions Ireland at the time had a GDP per capita above 70% of the EU average, unemployment rate of 15%, weak infrastructure in transport, energy and public services and lower education attainments EU Structural Funds and Cohesion fund had capacity to co-finance 75-90% of public investment projects in infrastructure (Tondl, 2007). [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/archive/objective1/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/objective1/index_en.htm)

65 Since 2015 Ireland is divided into 3 NUTS 2 regions. "... Kinlen (2003) supports the view that the regionalisation of Ireland was a pragmatic response in order to 'optimise' EU funding ..." (MacFeely, Moloney, & Kenneally, 2011).

66 First strategic planning guidelines (regional) for the Greater Dublin Area came out in 1999.

67 Landfill disposal in Ireland rose from €27 per tonne in 1999 to €100 in 2002 as landfill capacity diminished (Forfas, 2003).

Management Act 2001<sup>68</sup> was introduced to align with the EU Directive Packaging Waste 94/62/EC and Landfill Directive 1999/31/EC. The act transferred power to the local authority manager to make the final decision on waste management plans taking away the decision making from elected members<sup>69</sup>.

## **6.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning and territorial governance in practice**

Cohesion Policy directed through the National Development Plan (NDP) (2000-2006) highlighted balanced regional development as one of the core objectives however the regional assemblies were newly established to manage regional operational programmes and they had a peripheral role of considering “from time to time, the reviews of the development plans of local authorities in the region as carried out by the relevant regional authorities” (Grist, 2012). Around that period (1997) the Department of Environment published a document, ‘Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland’ which stated that local authorities had a key role as environment protection authorities and agents of sustainable development. Partnerships between local authorities and NGOs would be co-funded by the new Environment Partnership Fund (Department of Environment, 1997).

It reflected Ireland’s commitment to the principle and agenda for sustainable development agreed at the Earth Summit (1992). The strategy also responded to the ‘EU 5<sup>th</sup> Action Programme for the Environment’ which was reviewed during the Irish presidency of the European Union and contributed to Ireland’s participation in the UN review of Agenda 21.

In this context, the Department of Environment and Dublin City Council (DCC) (local authority), established a development company BRL, to implement a Masterplan for the regeneration of a housing estate high on the deprivation index<sup>70</sup> on the outer edge of Dublin city – Ballymun.

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68 As local authorities became caught between pressures from European waste directives and landfill targets and municipal waste charges for citizens, the waste management plan became an executive function carried out by the manager of a local authority instead of a democratic vote by elected representatives. <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2001/act/36/enacted/en/html>

69 By 2004 the Environmental Liability Directive 2004/35/EC emerged from the Maastricht Treaty with the concept ‘the polluter pays principle’ putting pressure on Irish households to pay for their waste collection, which until then had been paid through taxes

70 In 2001 unemployment rates in Ballymun, were three to four times the national average and majority of those who were unemployed had very low levels of education and skills (Ronayne & Creedon, 2002). 80% of housing was designated social housing and throughout its time Ballymun had become one of the 13 blackspots of high deprivation in Dublin (Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ireland, 2006).

Plans to rejuvenate the local economy derived from physical urban design and social partnerships which were local area based partnerships and NGOs. Ballymun Regeneration programme was proposed for a population of 30,000<sup>71</sup> with a 'Community Sustainable Strategy'. NGOs worked with the City Council and the Department of Environment on environmental and waste management issues including the circular economy (Ballymun Regeneration and Dublin City Council, 2006). The implementation of the community sustainable strategy included numerous arrangements that involved local community on the area (Department of Environment, 1997).

The funding model for Ballymun regeneration was a public private partnership. Plans included the demolition of the existing apartment blocks and a redesign of the entire area with mixed use, a town centre with well-designed urban spaces. The programme was to build a 'vibrant, self-sufficient Ballymun with ... a strong local economy, local jobs and good leisure and community facilities' (Murray, 2000). In 2017 Connolly (a local authority spatial planner formerly in the BRL team), states that many communities living in the apartments had not recycled before, and were used to throwing their rubbish down the chutes, not considering where it goes after that.

The demolition and construction phase begun in 2004 and severely slowed down during the Irish economic crash in 2008. The physical regeneration is not yet completed (2017). In terms of expenditure, the estimated project costs rose €500M between 1999 and 2006 due to "complex interconnected reasons" including a lack of risk analysis (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2007). Although connectivity, housing and some community and leisure facilities have improved significantly, Ballymun still is one of the places on the high deprivation index in Dublin.

Part of the plans of the 'Community Sustainable Strategy' that were halted due to the economic crash was a resource recovery and education centre to demonstrate the circular economy and waste management. The Rediscovery Centre started as collaboration between BRL, DCC and an NGO - Global Action Plan in 2004. As regeneration progressed, Clear (2017) stated as people were moving out of the old apartments to new housing they needed furniture so the centre started upcycling furniture to suit the local market.

When the Irish economy crashed in 2008 the small team operated in 4 different vacant buildings dotted around Ballymun. The enterprise used waste and unwanted materials as a resource and raw material for designing new products. They became a limited company in 2009 and continued to grow during the crash as their ethos and recycled products suited the new consumption habits of the local market.

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71 Existing total population 16,500 - 1998

In 2012 the Rediscovery team successfully applied for the EU LIFE+<sup>72</sup> grant under the WISER<sup>73</sup> project for reuse of the old boiler house formerly used for district heating for the apartments. Fifty percent of funding was also received from the

- Department of Communication, Climate Action and Environment
- Department of Housing Planning Community and Local Government
- Dublin City Council - the local authority own the building and land, collaborated with the centre on plans for its re-use.

The building was developed as a 3D text book which means that everything about the circular economy<sup>74</sup> can be learnt experientially on site. The building and its environs are used as an educational tool to demonstrate best practice through its construction and operation as an educational tool and resource. Clear (2017) said there were no issues between the centre and communities.

*'... the centre been built on relationships [...], we've involved local people at different stages throughout the project. We invite them to our open days once a month, provide tours and tea and coffee and chats so that people feel like this is their space and can use it. We built the centre for people in Ballymun, Dublin, Ireland and the European community'.*

Eastern Midlands Waste Region, Global Action Plan, Science Foundation Ireland, Environmental Protection Agency and National College of Art and Design have partnered with the centre in joint projects.

An important aspect of the centre is the community employment training schemes<sup>75</sup> which are run in the different Re-use workshops. Participants learn to become bicycle mechanics, fashion technicians and furniture technicians. Clear stated that the remit is wide and 94% of trainees have proceeded to full time education or are employed in well-known furniture stores or bicycle companies. The trainees are supported with training in merchandising, customer care and co-worker interaction, communication skills, classes on C.V. preparation and mock interviews as well as a list of network contacts of people in industry.

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<sup>72</sup> Launched in 1992, LIFE+ has co-financed over 4000 projects costing more than €3.1 billion for environmental and climate protection projects [https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/budget\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/budget_en) The LIFE+ programme focuses on the environment and supports ambitious projects like the Rediscovery Centre

<sup>73</sup> Working with Industrial Spaces to Exemplify Reuse

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n\\_proj\\_id=4953&docType=pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=4953&docType=pdf)

<sup>74</sup> Rediscovery Centre and the circular economy <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFffldX9Dqs>

<sup>75</sup> Tús initiative is a community work placement scheme and CE is a community employment programme that helps long term unemployed people re-enter the active workforce



Clear (2017) stated the team were able to adapt to the needs and level of the community and at the same time responded to issues on a national and European level. As they started out small they cultivated their audience step by step changing their messages to suit them. Many of their suppliers have adapted their company ethos to align with the centre.

Cohesion policy was directed through the National Development Plan 2000 -2006 for the regeneration in 2000 while the LIFE+ WISER project funded a percentage of reuse of the building of Rediscovery Centre in 2013. The regeneration of Ballymun and Rediscovery centre were planned when Ireland was under enormous pressure with waste management issues. Many key infrastructure investments relying on PPP were not realised once the economy crashed. Ballymun was no different. A 2015 report concluded that despite some improvements in housing and physical infrastructure, Ballymun remains one of the highest areas of deprivation in Dublin city and nationally (Harvey, 2015). This delivery mechanism has proven to be fragile as it depends on the economic cycle.

On a national level, under the EU Waste Framework directive, Ireland has progressively implemented clear government policy focus and economic initiatives on waste as a resource with virtual elimination of landfill (EPA, n.d.).

### **6.3. Recommendation**

Waste in Ireland was coupled with economic growth between 1997 -2007. EU environmental directives have been very effective in changing the way Ireland manages waste. Cohesion policy provided a catalyst on a macro scale to jump start plans for regeneration and urban renewal in Ballymun.

Cohesion policy is a facilitator. Based on the principle of subsidiarity, it is up to the individual government to use the best delivery mechanisms to implement plans. The example brings to light the fragile nature of top down master planning schemes delivered through public private partnerships. The regeneration of Ballymun went over budget by more than 100%<sup>76</sup> and 13 years later after the demolition of the first building, the socio-economic issues are significant. Questions arise such as if a life cycle analysis and risk analysis were examined before the start of the programme:

- Would regeneration one neighbourhood at a time have been more resilient?
- Was it necessary to demolish buildings or could the regeneration have been done in a reconstructive way?

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76 In terms of expenditure, the estimated project costs rose €500M between 1999 and 2006 due to “complex and interconnected reasons” including a lack of risk analysis p. 23 [http://www.audgen.gov.ie/documents/vfmreports/61\\_Ballymun.pdf](http://www.audgen.gov.ie/documents/vfmreports/61_Ballymun.pdf)

The example also shows how the LIFE programme facilitated the NGO in partnership with government departments to lead change in support of the local economy through community education and training, aligning with the EU Action Plan for a circular economy.

## **7. Transport Infrastructure and accessibility in the Southern Region Cork Harbour Project – Ringaskiddy Re-Development Project**

### **7.1. Thematic issues problems**

Cork harbour, located in the south west of Ireland, is one of Ireland's three largest regional ports with a turnover of €29.8m (2015 figures). Cork City is the second largest city in Ireland and the Greater Cork Area and is described by the Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP, 2001-2020) as one of the most dynamic areas in terms of education, research and development, internationally traded services and high-technology manufacturing. The region contains many MNC manufacturing and European Headquartered companies, particularly in the electronics, software, food pharmaceutical, bio-pharma and associated sectors. The Port plays a significant role in supporting the export led economic development of this region and the country, with traffic amounting to 11.2m tonnes (in 2015). CASP describes the Cork City-Region as "punching below its weight" in economic development terms, despite its significant assets. One of the key issues is maximising the economic potential and continuing to attract foreign investment and skilled labour. The Key Informant (KI) described the importance of the development not just locally, but regionally and nationally

*"The Development of the Port is considered regional level infrastructure. The development of the port is a problem due to peripherally, especially for the region (Southern Region: Cork, Limerick, West region) to develop economically. If you can't develop the capacity of the port you restrict the growth and development of the region as a whole".*

The KI further explained that there was a

*"... big change since 2000, Port of Cork was stuck, refusal would limit regional growth – export a lot from Limerick and Kerry, huge difference to Munster and regionally".*

The Redevelopment Project, within Cork harbour, (Cork Harbour Project) is located in Ringaskiddy, 13 km southeast of Cork City Centre. The project involves the transfer of major port activities from the existing Cork city port to this new site where most of the region's economic activity is based. The area surrounding the site contains pharma industrial clusters of including, Pfizer, Centocor, Novartis, Johnson & Johnson and GlaxoSmithKlein. The re-development is the first in a series of phases that will lead to an investment of approximately €100 million to allow for the extension of existing facilities operating in Ringaskiddy which aim to enhance the Port as a major economic area for the city and region. The project will mean the accommodation of larger container vessels in the terminal. The expansion comprises a 200m-long berth and new container yard which will become operational in 2018. The KI indicated that there was a lot of political support for the project given its importance in economic terms to strengthening the region as a whole:

*“Cork County Council has always supported [it] - seeing it as an essential economic driver. Economically – one of the issues – there was a lot of industry in Ringaskiddy – biopharma industry – this Port is a regional facility – to encourage economic development, big co-operatives to export from Cork – encourages biopharma. The major expansions in Port in last 2 years (wind turbines coming in to Kerry through Cork harbour) – has a knock on effect across the region”.*

Planning approval for the redevelopment was granted to the Cork Harbour Port Authority in May 2015. This was a second-round application for consent approval from the Irish Planning Appeals Board (An Bord Pleanála) who had determined that the project was Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) under the Strategic Infrastructure Development Act of 2006. The first application was previously refused on the grounds of lack of proximity to the national rail network. The Transport report on the application described the project as “representing a retrograde step in terms of sustainable transport planning (noting references to the potential for rail freight in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South West Region 2004-2020 and the Cork Area Strategic Plan 2001-2020)” (An Bord Pleanála, 2014). The KI stated that the application was successful because a Mobility Management Plan had been put in place by the applicant to traffic control measures “but the 2nd phase of the Port development was conditioned to be restricted until the Dunkettle Interchange (a major road junction) was upgraded”.

## **7.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

The re-development occurs within the spatial planning and economic development context of Ireland an island on the periphery of Europe and was justified on the basis that it consolidates Ireland’s capacity as an export-led economy. In this regard Chapter 7 of the National Development Plan 2007-2013 (supported by Cohesion Policy) recognises the economic importance of commercial ports to the economic strategy of the entire country. The plan specifically notes the need for relocation of the port to facilitate the Docklands development in Cork. The National Spatial Strategy (NSS, 2002-2020), which set out the framework for spatial planning in Ireland at the time of the application, identified Cork as a ‘Gateway’, the highest level in the NSS regional planning settlement hierarchy. As a Gateway it acts as an economic base to lever investment into the southwest region of the country. The KI described the development project as an exemplar of regional development

*“[it]...ticks all the boxes, allows for expansion of the city, underpins regional development in accordance with the NSS, and Cork’s position as a Gateway in the hierarchy of planning. This is central to the NSS”.*

Having such regional economic importance, the KI was of the view that stakeholder cooperation on the project was good, although there were some issues associated with capacity within organisations.

*”Cooperation between the Port of Cork, Irish Water, Local Authority and Inland Fisheries – for Strategic Infrastructure Development projects the SID would go to all agencies for comment (not to the Local Authorities) – and to Prescribed bodies under the planning legislation. The Planning Board may also contact other bodies such as the National Parks and Wildlife Service for comments as well. For some state agencies it can be difficult to cooperate with given the HR resource issues<sup>77</sup> because of the (economic) downturn”*

The Southwest Regional Planning Guidelines (2010-2022) identifies the Port of Cork as a key component of its economy and its regional infrastructure and placed onus on the Local Authority to facilitate its expansion by identifying appropriate locations for port activities served by road transport. The objectives of the Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP) to re-locate the existing port, while facilitating the rejuvenation of existing port area adjacent to the city for residential and amenity purposes, specifies the move is critical to securing the objectives of the NSS. The NSS emphasises the need for balanced regional development and interconnections between transport networks to enhance international access from all parts of the country and interchange between the national transport network, international airports and sea ports. The NSS also recognised the importance of sea ports and shipping services, including sea access from Cork.

Ireland’s National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 which aims to deliver on Ireland’s international obligations to reduce GHG emissions emphasises the need for modal shift through the infrastructural provisions of Transport 21, the then State Transport investment plan (now ‘Transport for Ireland’). In addition, the Department of Transport’s policy ‘Smarter Travel’ (2009-2020) strategy makes reference to the need for the maritime transport sector to use less polluting fuels to meet international obligations.

The National Port’s Policy (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2013) has a core objective to support a competitive maritime sector and identifies Cork as a Port of National Significance (Tier 1) and is included in the European TEN-T core network. These are described as ports that have the potential for high international connectivity which should be connected to the wider European rail and road network by 2030. The National Port’s Policy envisages that the revised TEN-T programme will enable funding through the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). The policy outlines that the Ireland will need additional capacity post-2030 and Tier 1 ports must have the necessary capacity to ensure access to regional and

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77 There was an embargo on recruitment into the public service following the management of the Irish economy by the Troika (European Commission, European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund).

global markets. While connectivity to rail is an objective of the policy it also notes that the majority of freight transport in Ireland is via road and will remain so for some time to come.

The South West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 while acknowledging the transport connectivity issues also identifies the Port of Cork as a key element of the regional economy and infrastructure. It regarded that there was an urgent requirement to identify and develop a new deep water port while helping to secure the redevelopment of the Cork City Docklands under the CASP. The KI stated that the newly updated CASP (2008) re-emphasised the need for the re-location of the port to ensure that the Docklands area could be developed.

The KI suggested that impact of spatial planning and governance as significant on getting the project over the line:

*“There was support for development in the various County Development Plans (CDPs) [local level planning framework] – [which] committed to redevelopment and the proposal lined up all the dots in terms of policy (nationally, regionally, at county level)”.*

The project therefore had the necessary fit in spatial planning terms within the national planning hierarchy (NSS) at the regional level. In addition, as the project would facilitate the freeing up of a city land bank.

There is one TEN-T ‘Core Network Corridor’ in Ireland. It runs from The North Sea – Mediterranean Corridor, which stretches from Belfast in the north of Ireland (in the UK), to Cork and Dublin, through the UK, Belgium, Luxembourg and France. The Inspector’s report on the 2nd planning appeal made specific reference to the EU TEN-T Regulations 1315/2013 and noted that the TEN-T network needs to ensure efficient multi-modality for more sustainable modal modes of transport for both freight and passenger travel. In the context of Cork as a Core Port and the adjacent N28 national primary road, as part of the Core Network of roads within TEN-T, it was noted that Article 41 of TEN-T Regulations provides that maritime ports within the core network must be connected with rail and road networks by December 2030, except where physical constraints prevent this occurring. These issues proved to be of paramount importance during the planning consent process and had a bearing on the deliberations and stakeholder consultations on the Port re-development. The KI commented that the issue of port-freight-rail linkages was therefore a key issue of concern to the Local Authority when considering the first application for the development and the initial application was refused on traffic generation grounds due to a lack of a rail link. The Draft Strategic Framework for Investment in Land Transport (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2014) outlines that regional distribution of port traffic will influence future transport investment in Ireland. The report acknowledges a shortfall in funding for heavy rail with the result road transport will remain the principal mode for air and seaport access. It states however that port capacity should not be constrained by this fact. The KI suggested that the

2nd planning application had succeeded because it had been able to argue that the necessary plans were in place to manage traffic generation and linkages and this was accepted by the consenting authority.

The KI mentioned that the Strategic Infrastructure Development Act as a key piece of legislation that made things easier for this particular project:

*“Yes, the SID has made things easier but it depends on the project – the Cork Incinerator was difficult. The Cork port project had political backing, the SID was meant to speed up planning but this is not the case because applicants have now to go to various stakeholder/agencies and Prescribed Bodies [the bodies listed in the planning legislation that must be consulted for their views on particular planning cases] for consultation in advance to get their viewpoints and address them at pre-planning (consultation) stage”.*

He further stated

*“The EIA and AA must be screened to see if the project needs to be assessed – under the new EIA legislation scoping is also mandatory and applicants must go the Prescribed Bodies before the application therefore applicants need to talk to all the stakeholders in advance”.*

The KI was the view that although its aims are to ensure that stakeholders can have an input into planning projects before they are decided upon to reduce conflicts and delays in the planning process, this makes the process quite complex.

The KI indicated that there are conflicts between spatial planning objectives and other compliance requirement for nature protection. He stated the Habitats Directive and the requirements of AA (Appropriate Assessment)

*“has complicated things no end, an awful lot. EIA and AA focus for Local Authorities. Local Authorities have to do EIA screening for AA. It is very resource intensive now you have Europe; the Courts etc....Ireland didn't interpret the Habitats Directive appropriately”.*

In terms of the influence of cohesion funding on spatial planning and territorial governance, the KI indicated that EU cohesion policy does not really have a bearing on decision making at local level although it was acknowledged that it does play a significant role in the initiation of projects. In this regard the KI stated

*“The County Development Plans and Local Area Plans are the bible. Regional Planning – yes - EU policy has an influence but not on the local side”.*

In terms of funding the EU cohesion policy has a greater influence:

*“project – reliant on funding – a step change for the port – it wouldn’t have happened without it”.*

The above all highlight the significance of the project in supporting regional and economic development and delivering on EU cohesion policy to reduce imbalances across European regions, in particular peripheral regions where transport accessibility continues to be an issue of importance. The influence of EU cohesion policy on spatial planning structure is evident as the spatial hierarchy and territorial governance underpinned the EU funded project. As an exemplar, the project demonstrates how joined up planning from national, through regional and local level plans can enable the actualisation of projects. It also illustrates new ways in which stakeholder consultation in planning processes can be more managed within the Irish SID consultation framework but from a KI perspective they still can remain cumbersome due to the resourcing constraints of the Irish public service who participate as key consultees to planning.

### **7.3. Recommendation**

It is recommended that for transport and accessibility projects of this nature national planning investment agencies plan the necessary requirements for inter-modal connections in advance of planning approval. This would reduce exposure to delays in the delivery of projects due to planning constraints based on projects being premature. The KI also emphasises the importance of having political support locally as well as having a hierarchy of ‘mentions’ about the project within the various regional and national level documents. This project was clearly referenced across numerous key documents and strategies in terms of spatial and national planning. This provided the necessary weight for the regional scale project and helped to secure planning consent.



## 8. Good Practice in the Peripheries and Specific Regions

### Eastern Midland Region Ferbane Community Plan - Offaly

Ferbane in West County Offaly, is a small rural town of under 1200 people on the periphery of the Eastern Midland Region categorised as “declining rural areas” (European Commission , 1996). It displays similar characteristics to other small peripheral rural towns (< 1500 . people) in Europe in terms of:

- continuing loss in population
- an absence of policy in service provision
- aging population
- economic disadvantages due to loss of skilled young people to urban centres
- reduced demand for key services like schools, childcare and transport

Between 1999-2001, the main employer of Ferbane, the Turf Board (Bord na Mona) began the process of terminating the production of peat. The Electricity Supply Board had decommissioned its peat-fired power station to facilitate change to renewable energy. This had a significant impact on the town as the Turf Board had been a core part of the employment structure since 1946 and Ferbane was at risk of decline and service closure. As part of the process, the West Offaly Fund was established by the Electricity Supply Board to facilitate and support community and economic development in the area. Funding through the LEADER programme (part of Cohesion Policy) set the scene for a Local Action Group (LAG)<sup>78</sup> called West Offaly Partnership and a community development plan ‘Ferbane Development Plan 2001’ facilitated by a very experienced planner<sup>79</sup>.

The Ferbane Community Plan was created in 2001 at the time of Agenda 2000 and CAP II<sup>80</sup> reforms. An EU Rural Development Monitoring Data Report 2001-2003 (Commission of the European Communities, 2006) mentions that CAP’s EAGGF <sup>81</sup> funds were mainly spent on 4 areas linked to agriculture such as agri-environment, less favoured areas, afforestation and early retirement for farmers, which resulted in their significance in National Plans. The

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78 A ‘LAG is a mix of public and private partners who collaborate on a plan to develop a project in a rural area on a local community scale (population of less than 100,000)

79 The planner was funded separately as LEADER does not provide funding for facilitation

80 Common Agriculture Policy II

81 European Guidance and Guarantee Fund which (EAGGF) was a fund within the overall European Union budget for financing the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) before it was replaced by EAGF & EAFRD in 2007- OECD

National Development Plan 2000-2006 (directed by cohesion policy) was created to draw down EU funding as an Objective 1<sup>82</sup> region and cohesion state.

It included measures that focused on rural development such as LEADER+, Western Development Fund and a White paper (1996-1999) 'A Strategy for Rural Development in Ireland' (Department of Agriculture and the Marine, 1999). The White paper set up a framework to foster social and economic development that would address issues of "rural population decline ... and increasing national dependence on Dublin for employment and wealth creation" (Lynch, Draft Ferbane Development Plan, 2001). It also highlighted terms such as 'inclusive approach' and 'partnership with rural community'. In Ireland, rural development policy is often coupled with agricultural policy and the LEADER programme was successful in effecting the delineation of the two (Kenny, 2003)

At the time the National Development Plan (2000-2006) stated the need to promote sustainable rural communities. However in practice, there were important missing links between real community needs, the economic situation and planning legislation. These gaps were filled by the LEADER<sup>83</sup> delivery mechanism, a tripartite partnership of voluntary – state – private sector for delivery of programmes where the "lead role in convening the local partnership was civil society". With LEADER (see Section 5.2), civil society was able to "fund local service provision, animate community organisations, do training, capacity building and establish community networks. It was considered an innovation as it provided a mechanism to cover, form and support both soft and hard infrastructure. That sort of integration was fairly new" (O'Keefe, 2017).

Ireland has a centralised system which is reflected in the experience that "trying to get central government to engage at local level was almost impossible. Drivers of activity at that level were always the local bodies such as the Educational Training Board, local authority and LEADER." On paper the spatial planning system appears to be a nested system but in peripheral areas, in practice, "the only decisions made at local level are decisions regarding

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<sup>82</sup> Objective 1 for NUTS 2 regions whose per capita GDP is lower than 75% of EU average which included the whole of Ireland (1994-99) –EC1996

<sup>83</sup>LEADER (Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale) is an approach to rural development that is place-based. It involves the development of multi-sectoral, multi-annual strategies and their implementation by quasi-autonomous partnerships, known as Local Action Groups (LAGs). LAGs are led by civil society (community and voluntary organisations) and involve the productive sector (farmers, unions and employers), environmental bodies, local authorities and the state sector. There are over 1,000 in the EU and 34 in Ireland. LAGs received EU funding through the second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy, with national and (regional governments) providing co-finance (Teagasc, 2014).

how the nationally decided policies and systems and programmes will be applied” (Lynch, 2017).

In the making of the Ferbane Community Plan, there was “no real involvement between different levels of government other than local government” (Lynch, 2017). There was strong collaboration within the Local Action Group i.e. between the officials and elected members of the Local Authority, community groups and ESB.

Key aspects to the participation process that encouraged the investment of the community:

- Individual invitations were sent to each household requesting them to send at least one representative. The planners were told that they would get 20-30 people, however 100 people turned up.
- The community drew up the questionnaire survey, delivered it to households in their areas and collected it back. Response rates were upwards of 90% because it was “people asking themselves” (Lynch, 2017)
- The community was challenged to work within the public policy framework.
- Focus groups set up to decide actions that the community could do itself and what it would need others to do.
- Other parties were included, such as The Turf Board, Electricity Supply Board, elected members and local authority officials formed part of the steering group.

There are two challenges in the planning system:

- the lack of an effective process for the creation of shared visions
- linkage between the making of a community plan and the adoption of that into the statutory process.

Lynch (2017) said that linkage between decision making and decision taking is weak. While there are a lot of resources poured into the making of a community plan, very little of the submission is taken on board. Furthermore there is very little communication or feedback on individual submissions, and reports on submissions tend to be generalised.

Although the planning system introduced a non-statutory pre-consultation phase called ‘issues papers’ (to provide an opportunity for people to communicate their issues), yet, “many communities do not have the capacity to gather their ideas collectively and make a planning submission” (Lynch, 2017). Therefore, the process of making a community plan helps people articulate their issues so they are ready to respond when there is a later request for submissions to issues arising.

The Ferbane process was different because of the way engagement took place, the process took a year and a half. Lynch (2017) stated that groups that were diametrically opposed, developed relationships and found themselves working with people they would never have thought they would be able to work with. As senior officials of the local authority and elected members formed part of the steering group of the LAG, it became a mechanism for them to engage with community and business organisations.

“You need both sides of the hook [...] if the communities are well developed and really doing their stuff, the other side of the system needs to be engaged. Otherwise it’s a waste of time.” (Lynch, 2017).

Lynch (2017) said that the process of bringing the community together to create a plan over a year and a half became more important than the outcome as the dynamic created a space for things to happen. The participation process produced a vision of a community that is working together – that has managed to come together with some agreed views and perspectives and a vision for the future encouraging both potential investors and local people.

Developments in the town influenced by this process include:

- The enterprise centre (The Irish Times, 2003)
- A child care facility
- Community Centre
- A new community school which amalgamated a few existing schools
- A bus service to the swimming pool 13 miles away

Lynch (2017) pointed out that

*“An important thing that happened was an enterprise centre was built – the idea was facilitated by the plan. It identified locations where things could take place and encouraged people to actually take it on. It encouraged the funders the West Offaly Enterprise Fund to provide funding for the enterprise centre [...] however you couldn’t necessarily say they wouldn’t have happened without the plan.”*

O’Keefe said following a policy document called ‘Putting People First’ in 2012 which was not preceded with any public consultation, the Local Government Act 2014 materialised with a proposal for new structures within the political and planning system. Its premise was that alignment was a good thing and that local development should fit with local government rather than the other way around. This diminished the innovation of LEADER in Ireland; the leadership role played by civil society (in LEADER) has been replaced with the local government. O’Keefe further stated that

“Local government in Ireland has a very low level of autonomy and is very much at the behest of what happens in the Custom House (central government). It’s a very centralised state – what central government says local government tends to follow and local government has been losing functions. Therefore in terms of innovations in LEADER we’ve gone backwards with regard to distinctiveness, flexibility and in terms of innovation”.

There are new challenges to LEADER with the restructuring of the planning system.

The first is that the community projects have to suit the call for proposal. If a community project is about building a community centre and the specific call for proposal is on tourism then they have to wait until the next cycle which could be two years (O’Keefe, 2017).

Second is the administration and auditing have become so procedural and bureaucratic that development workers are more like administrators. Minor departures from procedures are being scrutinised. Third the LEADER budget was halved as a share has been allocated to farming community as there was tension between the farming community and community interests.

Long term impacts of LEADER on territory and institutions in peripheral development

The main function of LEADER has been in the facilitation of community based planning and development with a 'place based' approach. By supporting rural and peripheral communities in a variety of ways it has helped to maintain viable populations in areas that would otherwise not have had them. Lynch made the following points on its effectiveness in supporting local communities:

- Forty years ago, communities used to come in to the local authority and they use to say 'We have this problem how are you going to solve it?' Now it's much more 'We have this problem, how can you help us solve it?' LEADER had a big part in the capacity building.
- It had a significant impact on the tourism infrastructure and craft food industry. Furthermore, many community facilities would not exist without the LEADER support.
- LEADER has affected the way the agricultural community now thinks about its business opportunities with farm diversification.
- Sustainable rural development needs to be more spatial in concept responding to local needs in relation to the global context, rather than reliance on one sector, such as a peat-fired power station.

The LEADER programmes have facilitated rural communities to build capacity, adopt resilient place based approaches, encourage tourism and craft food industries and widen the concept of rural development. To keep this momentum, voluntary and community groups need resources in terms of finance and expertise, to keep building capacity and economic renewal. The case study also showed the importance of a sensitive expert outsider to catalyse the community's vision and shape it into a strategy that belongs to the community.

## **9. Good Practice in Transport Infrastructure and Accessibility**

### **Eastern Midland Region**

#### **Dublin International Airport - Terminal 2**

Ireland's Dublin Airport is an international connecting point on the TEN-T and therefore eligible for finance under one of EIB's priority lending objectives (European Investment Bank, 2009). The development of Ireland's International Airport second terminal project (T2) in 2010, aimed to enhance the infrastructural capacity and consolidate the airport's international gateway status within the context of transport agencies, airlines, third parties and environmental policies. It was established under the National Development Plan (NDP) 2007-2013 (The Stationery Office, 2007) supported by Cohesion Policy and the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (The Stationery Office, 2002), which adopted concepts from the European spatial Development Perspective 1999.

Spatial planning in Ireland supports the implementation of Operational Programmes (OPs) and regional and sub-regional strategies provide the framework for their delivery and supports individual projects funded by OPs. Ireland has three regional assemblies. This good practice case study is located in the Eastern Midland Regional Authority (EMRA) in the Greater Dublin Area. Local level 1- governance of planning in this region is managed by the Fingal Local Authority, the most northerly Dublin's four local authorities.

Cohesion Policy directed through the NDP pointed to the need for investment in Ireland's three State airports (Dublin, Cork and Shannon). To this end national funding was allocated under the NDP to upgrade road transport networks under Transport 21 (the M50, M1 and M3 roads) and other investments to support the expansion of the airport (i.e. Metros North and West and national and non-national roads). The decision to approve the expansion also had regard to Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs, 2004-2006), the strategic transport policy for Dublin (Dublin Transportation Office, 2000) and the Fingal Local Authority (Local Level 1) Development Plan 2005-2011 (CDP, Fingal County Council, 2005) and previous plans which had as their objectives to provide for east-west expansion and the Local Airport Local Area Plan. Fingal CDP made provision for the airport expansion in line with the RPGs and outlined a comprehensive roads programme serving the airport and set aside lands specifically for the development of Metro North, the then planned (not yet delivered) first Irish 'underground' rail line.

Irish aviation policy has been described by the KI as somewhat "protracted", given that there was no overarching policy prior to 2015. Spatial planning policy documents did recognise the importance of the airport but only "low level policy" was available in the form of Local Area Plans and Development Plans at local level 1 to underpin its development. This meant that the consultation with key stakeholders in connection with the proposed expansion was never clear cut. A new national aviation policy was put in place in 2015 (Department of Transport,

Tourism and Sport, 2015) and is considered by the KI to be critical to the development of T2 as it provides an overarching aviation policy or “superstructure around aviation” that hitherto was absent in Ireland.

The enabling Irish planning legislation, the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (Irish Statute Book No. 30, of 2000) provides a number of opportunities for consultation with stakeholders and public participation in line with the Aarhus Convention on the right to public participation in planning (UNECE, 1998) and the Directive on Public Participation (2003/25/EC). Pre-planning consultation with stakeholders and with local government is afforded on proposed developments under the Planning and Development Act. Public participation in planning is facilitated by means of making submissions on planning applications prior to development consent and both first and third-party appeals are allowed against planning decisions made by Local Authorities. The KI was of the view that participation can be problematic however, in some instances:

*“Aarhus (Convention and Directive on the right to public participation in environmental decision making) – in Ireland you don’t need any locus standi to make a submission – it’s not good. Public participation is ok when you are dealing with umbrella (or representative) groups but when you are dealing with individuals it’s hard – it can be challenging when you put forward proposals (...to address concerns/issues which may be unique to individuals). In terms of understanding stakeholder requirements it’s easier to respond to specific concerns of umbrella/representative groups”.*

The KI further explained that the Irish planning process can be seen by applicants to be cumbersome and sometimes mired by delays due the high level of participation and consultation afforded.

(As part of standard pre-planning process) “The proponents of applications must consult with national bodies, transport bodies (e.g. National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure for Ireland) and sit down with them (to discuss the project), not necessarily at speed. The intent is good but they (proponents) could be caught by different perspectives, it just takes time e.g. surface access (i.e. transport linkages), getting approval or alignment is a lengthy process”

In the case of T2, public transport access was a key issue that the Dublin Airport Authority had to address with relevant stakeholders during the planning consent process. The Inspector’s report on the planning application (An Bord Pleanála, 2006/PL06F.220670) reviewed the adequacy of the Environmental Impact Assessment in this regard. The final preferred site was selected on the basis of road access and proximity to the (then) proposed underground, a Ground Transportation Centre, bus terminus and car parking. The transport elements of the Environmental Impact Assessment were considered adequate and robust by the Inspector, however several stakeholders including Ryanair, An Taisce - The National

Trust for Ireland, and residents, raised concerns about transport and traffic generation issues arising from increased passenger numbers, as well as concerns about conflict with national and international commitments to reduce GHG emissions. The Key Informant (KI) referred to the need for pre-planning consultations with transport stakeholders, to discuss how surface access would be facilitated and to discuss modal split options. Transport issues proved to have a key influence on the planning case as conditions were attached to final consent approval placing a cap on passenger numbers to 35 MPPA (million passengers per annum).

Stakeholder consultation can therefore lead to significant alterations in outcomes for project delivery and can create time delays which can be costly for proponents. The KI referred to the introduction of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act (SID) 2006 (No. 27 of 2006) as a positive measure to address the delays associated with planning in Ireland. Section 37(a) 2 of the SID Act requires that developments in the categories listed in the Seventh Schedule of the Act<sup>84</sup> that are deemed (a) 'strategic' in nature (i.e. of economic or social importance to the country or region); (b) would contribute to national spatial and/or regional planning objectives or (c) would have significant effect on the area of one or more planning authority, are sent directly to the Irish Planning (Appeals) Board, An Bord Pleanála, for planning approval, rather than to the Local Authority. In effect the process limits the possibility of third party appeals but maintains the right for pre-planning consultation and public submissions on SID applications. In the case of T2 the application was deemed to be a SID project. Prior to the application, Dublin Airport Authority (DAA) carried out pre-planning consultations with various stakeholders including Fingal Local Authority (local level 1) and the Department of Transport (national level) and the Irish Rail Procurement Agency (RPA)/Transport Infrastructure for Ireland (TII) (national level), to discuss issues around modal split and growth in passenger numbers. In terms of cooperation between agents the KI stated:

*“There is a general positive approach, but you have to go to the bodies individually, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on environmental monitoring and the National Transport Authority (NTA) and National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS). The proponent must go to each department individually”.*

The KI further indicated that the process of consultation between agents and stakeholders was not difficult per se; rather she indicated it may be that lack of resources that may be at the route of the problem:

*“Don't think there is a difficulty (with the process of cooperation and consultation per se) but there is a significant time difference between how long it takes for each agent to make a decision (during pre-planning consultations with the various agents*

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<sup>84</sup> Energy, Transport and Environmental infrastructure



*involved) – (it's a question of ) efficiency of resources (within the various agencies, which might be stretched). Dividing the project up into work streams (is good). There will always be stumbling blocks, once you get into planning (it's more efficient) but pre-planning consultation can take up to 2 years”.*

Although the KI referred to the benefits of the SID as providing a “one-stop-shop for planning applications” it considered that it was not necessarily efficient in making its determinations because all developments of a certain type have to be referred to An Bord Pleanála first, even if the applicant is of the view that the development does not come under the Act:

*“[the SID] has no trigger or no bar (that would suggest which type of applications might be deemed ‘strategic’ in nature by proponents). Applications [must] go through to An Bord Pleanála, even if there is a view by the applicant that the project is not of strategic importance”.*

In terms of models of good practice in Ireland the KI also indicated that aligning the national planning framework (Government of Ireland, 2017) with the (proposed) National Investment Plan (NIP) (Government of Ireland) and specific planning strategies would facilitate more joined up planning and ensure that projects could come to fruition more seamlessly. In the last twenty years EIB loans have been used for aviation in tandem with the NDP that was supported through Cohesion Policy.

## 10. Conclusions for Thematic Issues

The examples and practices demonstrate two sides of Cohesion Policy – the strategic level and civil society level.

- Cohesion Policy directed through the National Development Plans for large projects in tandem with other EU funding.
- Legislation changes to enable fast track delivery mechanisms for strategic infrastructure projects

Examples on the strategic level, to improve parity and connectivity at the EU regional level on National Transport projects are the Cork Port tier 1 and the International Airport. They demonstrate Cohesion policy projects directed through the NDP working in tandem with EIB and TEN-T. National legislation was adapted to fast track such strategic projects with the Strategic Infrastructure Development Act 2006. This top down mechanism for delivering large scale projects have worked well with notable exceptions such as the Corrib pipeline, pylons for Eirgrid and the restructuring of Water Infrastructure and associated charges controversies. These experiences indicate the importance of the focus on engagement at civil society level and value of including communities at the strategic level earlier on in the process.

Cohesion Policy directed through LEADER and INTERREG working directly with rural communities

- built capacity in rural communities
- supported place based development which facilitates local economy
- changed the way rural communities approach issues they face

The other side of Cohesion policy, shown in examples, was directed through LEADER and INTERREG which affect civil society more directly, connecting them to the concept of the EU and experiencing the direct effect of the policy. What became clear from this set of examples and practices was the outstanding capacity built within communities over the last forty years. When provided with the right resources the case studies show that the place based approach with communities was the beginning of socio-economic development in their regions. A number of essential points were revealed and these were gaps:

- in the role of a paid facilitator to assist the community planning process
- in cultivating subject matter knowledge and language with communities of interest during public consultation
- in connecting community needs with strategic needs

There is a gap in the role of a paid facilitator for community development. Communities often need outside expertise or agent to assist them through the planning or development process. The public needs assistance to know how to respond to planning strategies otherwise public consultation is not inclusive.

Currently the regional assemblies have requested for submissions from the public for their input into the issues papers. Which section of the public would have the knowledge and

language to respond meaningfully to a regional spatial and economic strategy? The good practice of the Ferbane Community Plan (section 8) shows that many communities do not have the capacity to gather their ideas collectively and make a planning submission (Lynch, 2017). Therefore the process of making a community plan helps people articulate their issues so they are ready to respond when there is a request for issues papers.

The connectivity between regional and local would be particularly important now that the regional assemblies have a stronger role in the management of EU project participation such as INTERREG, LEADER and PEACE. One interviewee recommended that the consultation process needed to be a two way approach, which means cultivating and educating the interested public.

The examples spotlighted

- the strong capacity within community and voluntary groups; intermediate agencies; NGOs with a 'can do' attitude
- the good results that come about when the State cooperates as an enabler
- a flexible approach with less bureaucracy works best at local level due to the voluntary nature of community groups
- rural diversification is supported by less centralised and place based approaches which in turn encourages competitiveness

These groups showed the capacity to have foresight and drive development with a place based approach giving them a competitive edge. However recent top down changes to the delivery mechanism of LEADER, rigid priority themes and funding cuts to LEADER will affect heterogeneous community development that support vibrant rural communities and entrepreneurship. The examples show that in rural communities, it would work well if the State assumes the role of an enabler of communities rather than a regulator (O'Keefe, 2017).

The example in the Northern and Western region, showed the importance of intermediate agencies such as the WDC. Through their direct experience in the region, they have a 'lived in' understanding of the capacity of the local landscape and culture. They were therefore able to foresee and engage a bioenergy network to align with renewable energy requirements of the EU2009 directive and Cohesion policy thematic objectives.

The examples showed that through Cohesion policy instruments, a wider understanding of rural policy is demonstrated through rural diversification in activities such as bioenergy, SME, community enterprises, craft foods and tourism. A 'can do' attitude has been fostered in rural communities through Cohesion policy projects over the years and it should be further encouraged and developed. While Cohesion policy thematic objectives and priorities work well at regional level, a less centralised, flexible approach that allows local communities autonomy to propose their place based requirements is essential in developing local economies and encouraging competitiveness.

Conflicting policies or regulations and risk aversion was revealed such as

- the EU competition regulation, support for local economy, rural diversification and inaccessibility of the energy grid to community energy companies
- the policy of changing to more sustainable energy led to the closure of a peat fired power station and the loss of livelihood for a large section of a rural, peripheral community
- excessive risk aversion and bureaucracy for small projects that discouraged innovation on local level

Spatial policies rather than sectoral, seem to work best where local agenda require flexibility of approach. It remains to be seen if the new regional spatial and economic strategies will provide this with sufficient political leadership and understanding.

The Ballymun example showed that a full life cycle analysis and risk analysis are required for capital spending on master planning projects with high risk, while the Ferbane practice showed that rigid scrutiny and bureaucracy is unnecessary for community projects where risk is low, budgets are modest and community, voluntary.

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## 12. Appendix

### Final list of interviewees

Examples and Good Practice	Interviewees
Example Peripheries and Specific regions Northern & Western Region BioPAD	Pauline Leonard, Western Development Commission
Example Southern region Transport Infrastructure and accessibility Cork Harbour Project	Representative, Cork City Council
Example Southern Region Support for local economy Rural Alliances	Sean de Buitlear, South Kerry Development Partnership  Dr. Brendan O'Keefe, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick University involved in EU INTERREG and LEADER projects
Example Eastern Midland Region Support for local economy Rediscovery Centre	Sarah Clear, core team of Rediscovery Centre Dr. Sarah Miller, CEO of Rediscovery Centre  Pamela Connolly, senior planner from Dublin City Council and former planner in the Ballymun Regeneration Ltd government consortium
Good Practice Peripheries and Specific Regions Eastern Midland Region Ferbane Community Plan	Ciaran Lynch, Tipperary Institute and Limerick Institute of technology (former senior planner in Clare County Council and sat on LEADER evaluation boards)  Dr. Brendan O'Keefe, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick University involved in EU INTERREG and LEADER projects
Good practice Transport Infrastructure and accessibility Eastern Midland Region Terminal 2 Development Dublin Airport	Representative, Dublin Airport Authority

# COMPASS – Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe

## **Case Study Report: Poland**

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## Abbreviations

CP	Cohesion Policy
EC	European Commission
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
EGTC	European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
TA2020	Territorial Agenda 2020
TG	Territorial Governance
ROP	Regional Operational Programme

# 1. Introduction

Despite such strong stimuli as accession to the EU and cohesion policy funds, spatial planning system in Poland was not able to instantly adapt to socio-economic transformation. Problems have arisen at all levels - national (large-scale planning inertia), regional (disorganized planning hierarchy) and local (land use policy pathology). The scale of these difficulties has been significantly differentiated in both sectoral and regional terms. These occur with varying strength in spatial units of diverse socio-economic functions and are particularly identified in dynamic metropolitan areas (suburbanization zones), in newly developed transport corridors, but also in peripheral and border areas as well as the ones with important environmental functions. Polarization in economic development, strong migration processes as well as historically and culturally based differences have resulted in diverse spatial development issues to be faced by given regions of Poland. Intensification of infrastructure investments due to the influx of EU funds has resulted in new challenges for the planning system.

The factors mentioned above have influenced the scope of case study analysis in Poland. The inquiry has covered both most developed regions (Mazowieckie Voivodeship, whose GDP has exceeded the EU average), favourably located area but requiring restructuring (Łódzkie Voivodeship with its agglomeration of severe depopulation) and peripheral regions (Podlaskie Voivodeship with one of the lowest GDP in the EU and large percentage of valuable natural areas). The three selected regions (Figure 1) gather up all thematic issues comprising the basis of case study analysis. Thereby, challenges for spatial policy in Poland as well as selected regions correspond to all the priorities within the EU 2020 Territorial Agenda.

In the 2004-2006, 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 EU Programming periods, all selected regions benefited from European Union cohesion policy within the framework of national operational programs (the largest of them being OP Infrastructure and Environment) and individual, Voivodeship-scale Regional Operational Programs. In addition, the Podlaskie Voivodeship has benefited from macro-regional operational program dedicated to Eastern Poland (targeted at five Voivodeships with particularly low GDP per capita) as well as INTERREG funds.

A detailed selection of examples and good practices analyzed in each of the Voivodeships are presented in Table 1. Regions covered by five thematic issues, providing six examples and two cases of good practice to be studied - in the Mazowieckie and Podlaskie Voivodeships. In practice, the Podlaskie Voivodeship example concerning "peripheries and other specific regions" thematic issue has also covered the aspect of "cross-border regions". These issues coincided. They have also been included in this report considering their relevance (the only analyzed region located at the EU's external border) and the specificity of one of the good practices (Augustów Canal).

Content of the report was prepared on the basis of desk review and experts opinion. Three focus group workshops were organized and seven interviews. In total 47 participants took part in workshops

(region Mazowieckie: 16, region Podlaskie: 19, region Łódzkie: 12) and seven interviewees answered personally or via email.

Table 1. Examples and good practice study in the regions for Poland

Region	Code	Polycentricity and suburbanization	Peripheries and other specific regions	Cross-border regions	Support for local economy	Transport infrastructure and accessibility	Natural and cultural heritage	Convergence objectives
<b>Mazowieckie</b>	PL12	Ex/P				Ex		C
<b>Podlaskie</b>	PL34		Ex/P				Ex	C, E
<b>Łódzkie</b>	PL114				Ex	Ex		C

*Ex - possible example to study , P – possible good practices to study, all cross-border examples and good practices are treat as one ,C - Convergence, R - Regional competitiveness and employment, E - European territorial cooperation*

Figure 1. Case study areas





## 2. General characteristics of the regions

### 2.1. Mazowieckie Voivodeship

Mazowieckie Voivodeship is the largest in the country (area - 35,600 sq km, population 38.4 mln in 2016). It consists of 37 districts and 5 cities with district rights. Districts are further divided into 314 communes (35 urban, 50 urban-rural and 229 rural). At the same time it is the most diversified region in Poland in terms of socio-economic development. The specificity of Mazovia arises from its capital character and its relatively large geographical extent in relation to other voivodeships.

The metropolis of Warsaw is a strong pole of growth of the region (the city - about 1.8-2.0 mln inhabitants, the agglomeration - about 2.5-3.0 mln inhabitants - due to the lack of registration of the significant part of internal and external migration the actual number is difficult to determine). Next large regional centres are Radom (216.2k according to the residency criterion), Płock (121.7k), Siedlce (79.9k), Ostrołęka (52.6k), Ciechanow (44.5k). Thus, the settlement system in terms of demographic potential is unbalanced. Divergence increases as a result of the outflow of population to Warsaw and its surroundings, with the explicit omission of intermediate hierarchical levels, i.e. large and medium-sized cities, which consistently lose population (eg Radom – 233k in 1996 and 216k in 2016, Ciechanow - respectively 47k and 45k). Following, depending on the economic situation, more or less dynamic population growth is expected in the Warsaw agglomeration, with the tendency of stagnation in Warsaw itself, partly due to the outflow of people outside the city. Peripheries of the Voivodeship are endangered with severe depopulation, especially in the east and north of the region.

Due to the concentration of higher-order functions, especially economic governance, GDP per capita in Warsaw is among the highest in the country (31.3k EUR, 2014). At the same time, in southern subregion, GDP per capita did not exceed 7.8 EUR per capita: differences between them are fourfold. Mazowieckie Voivodeship has a well formed service sector (the Warsaw agglomeration), as well as the industrial sector (i.e. Plock - the largest refinery in the country, Radom - the electromechanical industry) and agriculture sector, including fruit sector (orchards around Grojec, Warka). Despite relatively poor natural conditions, agriculture is well developed.

The transport network in the supra-local system was developed, especially in the last decade. The capital of Poland was directly connected (in western direction) with Łódź (later Poznan and Berlin). Moreover, transport network was expanded to the north (Gdańsk), south (Kraków, Katowice), north-eastern (Białystok) and south-east (Lublin). Transportation and settlement network is eminently radial (with centre in Warsaw). Coherence between the other large and medium centres of the Voivodeship is significantly low, contributing to the lack of flow of growth stimulant factors, limited cooperation between cities and, in consequence, deepening internal disproportions.

The highly development disproportions between Warsaw and the rest of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship result in an unbalanced supply-demand labour market and generate strong commuting to work. Considering this phenomenon, Warsaw's impact zone is the biggest in the country and covers

areas even beyond the voivodeship's borders (over 100 km). This is the main cause to the highly congested roads in the Warsaw agglomeration, including access roads, as due to insufficient public transport operation, individual traffic is predominant.

Suburbanisation processes, which emerged mostly after ~1995, are greatly advanced, due to the socio-economic transformation and the enrichment of the society. Distinctively, in last two decades this process was related not only to the suburban area of Warsaw, but also to the cities at the lower levels in the settlement hierarchy, including even centres of districts. Simultaneously occurs a strong dispersion of buildings, resulting in spatial chaos and increased expenditures on infrastructure, which is highly associated with over-estimation of demand for lands for development in the local planning documents. In some suburban communes (Lesznowola, Piaseczno) the potential permissible demographic capacity exceeds 10-20 times the real needs in the 20-30 year perspective.

The main planning document for the region is the Spatial Development Plan of the Mazovian Voivodeship (2004), which was updated in 2017. There are no plans of development for the Warsaw agglomeration (only a detailed zoning plan expertise for 2012). In 2011-2013 a number of expert and strategic studies (i.e. demography, labour market, education, transport) were established within the framework of the large project Development Trends of Mazovia Region. Planning documents are generally more up-to-date at the lowest level (Communes Spatial Development Conditioning and Directions Studies). Local Spatial Management Plans coverage in communes is on the level of 31.2% of their total area (4.3k local spatial management plans in 2015). Location of investments (housing, infrastructure, etc.) on areas without local spatial management plans is based on the *Decision* on Conditions of Development and Spatial Management, contributing to the deepening of spatial chaos, environmental problems, etc.

## **2.2. Podlaskie Voivodeship**

Podlaskie Voivodeship is situated peripherally in the north-eastern part of Poland. The region is bordered by two states: Belarus to the east (comprising 236.3 km of UE external border) and Lithuania to the north (100.3 km of border length) as well as by three Polish Voivodeships. The main transit route eastwards runs through region's territory (towards the Lithuanian border) - the TEN-T corridor. Podlaskie Voivodeship is administratively divided into 14 land counties, 3 cities with county rights and 118 municipalities. It occupies the area of 20,187 sq. km (6.5% of the total area of Poland) and was in 2016 inhabited by population of 1,187,587 (3.1% of the total population of Poland). The region is characterized by the lowest population density among 16 regions (Voivodeships) of Poland – 59 persons per sq. km; (compared to the average of 123 for Poland), whereas in rural areas this figure is merely 24 persons per sq. km (the average for Poland is 52). The level of urbanization is 60.3%. The region has experienced a very high emigration rate (91.4 per 1,000 inhabitants compared to the average of 20.6 for Poland). Rural areas are characterized by a considerable rate of depopulation. Negative demographic phenomena can lead to disruption of demographic structure and further depopulation of peripheral areas. The urban settlement network consists of: Białystok (population of 296,628), capital city of the Voivodeship being the core of metropolitan area; two

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subregional cities: Łomża (62,716) and Suwałki (69,543), 10 medium-sized cities (of 10-30 thous. inhabitants) and 27 small towns (<10 thous. inhabitants). The rural network (3,757 villages) is dominated by small settlements, with less than 200 inhabitants (over 80%). In the area within strong impact of the largest cities, villages have lost majority of their agricultural functions. On the other hand, areas of attractive landscapes and high natural assets, tend to undergo transformation into regional and local recreation centres.

The unique natural and cultural qualities of the region in European scale include: a) presence of 4 primeval forests, including the Białowieża Forest as the only area of almost untouched forest in lowland Europe; b) substantial forest cover (31.6%); c) high concentration of natural areas and objects protected by law, of which numerous are unique for Poland and Europe; d) greatest cultural diversity in Poland in terms of nationality and religion (population of non-Polish nationalities, i.e. Belarusian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Russian, Romani, Tatar and Jewish represents 4.6%) along with cultivating rites, traditions, customs and preserving valuable urban and rural arrangements, historic buildings and architectural objects; e) large resources of lake water concentrated in the northern part of the region (about 310 lakes above 0.5 hectare of surface); f) attractive landscape in the northern part of the region (diversified post-glacial land relief, concentration of lakes, wetlands and marshes, meandering river valleys, high share of forest cover) high quality of air, water and acoustic climate (one of the cleanest regions in Poland, the so-called Green Lungs of Poland). Nature protection is implemented by two complementary systems: the National System of Protected Areas - NSPA (32.0% of the region) and Natura 2000 network of nature protection areas (32.7% of region's areas). The NSPA consists of 4 national parks, 3 landscape parks, 93 nature reserves, 13 protected landscape areas and other local forms of protection. Natura 2000 network consists of: 12 Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and 24 Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) later transformed into Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). The Białowieża Forest is recognized as the World Biosphere Reserve and the only Polish natural site on the UNESCO's World Heritage List. Since 2014 both the Polish and Belarusian parts of the forest are considered as cross-border area of the "Białowieża Forest" UNESCO World Heritage Site. Furthermore, a network of ecological corridors has been established in order to maintain coherence of elements comprising the regional natural system.

Apart of developing tourism within the region there are favorable conditions for the expansion of cattle breeding (20% grassland) and production of heat and electricity with the use of renewable energy sources, especially solid biomass and to a certain extent wind energy. Hence, the relatively high share of the GVA in agriculture (NACE Rev. 2 section A) of 7.4 versus 2.8 for Poland's average. The agro-food industry is currently the main branch of region's economy. Predominant industries include wood and furniture manufacturing as well as ship and boat production. The region is one of the least economically developed; in 2015 the GDP per capita was as low as 48% of the EU average (in PPS) and about 72% of Poland's average (in PLN). In 2016, the unemployment rate was 6.8%, of which approximately one third were the long-term unemployed. The majority of municipalities have an agricultural character, with a low-income budget, which has a major impact on the low coverage of

land by local spatial management plans. Cohesion policy plays a very important role in the development of the region, including its own regional programme (Regional Operational Programme for Podlaskie Voivodeship).

### **2.3. Łódzkie Voivodeship**

Łódzkie Voivodeship is situated in the centre of Poland. At the end of 2015 the population of the region was 2 493 603 people which placed the region on the 6. place in Poland. The total area of the region was 18 219 km<sup>2</sup> (9. in Poland). The average population density in the area was 137 people/km<sup>2</sup>. The percentage of urban population was 63,08%.

Łódzkie Voivodeship is characterised by a medium level of economic development and is 6. in Poland when it comes to GDP per capita achieved indicators and on the 3. place in terms of GDP growth per capita (2016). According to sub-regions the level of economic development is largely diversified and only in the sub-region of the city of Łódź it exceeds the national average (124,6% in 2014). In 2015 region characterized with lower (92,65%) than national average gross income and unemployment rates (11.8%) close to the national average (Central Statistical Office of Poland).

The share of industry in the generation of GVA is estimated at 30.5% (2014) which is one of the highest results in Poland and above the national average (26.5% in 2014), which indicates an industrial-agricultural nature of the region. The economic potential of the Łódź Voivodeship comprises of a high level of industrialization. Moreover, region is a significant centre of electrical energy production.

As stated in Development Strategy for the Łódzkie Region (Board of the Łódzkie Region, 2013) economic problems of the Łódź Voivodeship include mostly low efficiency and competitiveness of industry (caused by medium-low technology), polarization of economic development, caused by capital concentration in Łódź and Belchatowski district, underdevelopment of services outside municipalities, poor dynamics of economy restructuring processes and unfavourable agricultural structure (majority of small farms < 5 ha).

Łódzkie Voivodeship is relatively well-served by the road network, which is evidenced by the high density of hard surface public roads and high density of the national roads. The region is characterised by a very central location with intersection of several motor- and railways including the crossroads of four Polish motorways (A1, A2, S8, S14) and one international airport, which results in fast accessibility from other Polish regions. Great advantage of the region is its location on the crossroad of two core Trans-European Transport Network corridors (North Sea-Baltic corridor and Baltic-Adriatic corridor). Region's accessibility is also improved by recently developed ring roads of cities and towns. A major shortcoming of the existing road layout is its bad technical condition. This mainly includes damaged pavement, technical parameters of roads not adapted to their function, low intersection capacity and road capacity not adapted to traffic.

Planning documents of the region operate on four levels. Main binding planning document on EU level is Europe 2020 Strategy. On the national level, the objectives of Łódzkie Voivodeship are cohesive with objectives stipulated in the following strategic documents: The Long Term National Development Strategy – Poland 2030, The Medium Term National Development Strategy 2020, The National Strategy of Regional Development 2010-2020: Region, Cities, Rural Areas and The National Spatial Development Concept 2030. On sub-national level, vision of developing the region, aimed targets and the way of their achievement is included in Development Strategy for the Łódzkie Region for the years 2007-2020, which is cohesive with the Spatial Development Plan of the Łódzkie Region (updated). On local level (2) direction of the progress is defined by Development Plans for Communes and Communes Spatial Development Conditioning and Directions Study. Local Spatial Development Plans are legally binding planning documents in the form of a local law.

### 3. General overview of thematic issues in country

*Table 2. Impact of the cohesion policy on thematic issues*

Thematic issues	National		Regional		Local	
	Level of importance	Impact of the cohesion policy	Level of importance	Impact of the cohesion policy	Level of importance	Impact of the cohesion policy
Polycentricity and suburbanization	3	1	3	2	2	3
Peripheries and other specific regions	3	3	3/2 (depending on the region, more important in weaker regions)	2	2	1
Support for local economy	2	2	2	3	3	3
Transport infrastructure and accessibility	3	3	3	3	2	2
Natural heritage	2	2	3	2	3	2
Cultural heritage	2	1	2	1	2	2

#### **Polycentricity and suburbanization**

During transformation, a strong emphasis in the spatial development of Poland was placed on the largest urban centres (as a result of market mechanisms) or rural areas. This has led to a situation, in which regulations formally concerning supporting polycentricity were robustly exposed (especially in the National Spatial Development Concept 2030, NSDC; 2012), but virtually not implemented, particularly at sub-regional level. As a consequence, spatial polarization of the country regarding various aspects (demographic, economic) has deepened. Even more pronounced disparities occurred at regional level - especially in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship. The basic document - National Development Strategy 2020 (NDS, 2012) does not mention polycentricity at all, while another - National Strategy for Regional Development 2010-2020: Regions, cities, rural areas (NSRD, 2010) - only casually refers to this concept in two places. Favorable changes occurred as a result of some infrastructure investments (after 2004), but these were selective in spatial terms. The Strategy for Responsible Development (SRD, 2017), adopted in 2017, strongly supports medium-sized cities, so far highly underestimated in the settlement network of the country, offering dedicated support projects to these cities.

The issue of suburbanization and uncontrolled dispersion of settlement is considered at all levels of territorial governance, including the state level, but these are not accompanied by substantial and effective operations. The most significant condition - a defective legal system, clearly promoting and guaranteeing the constitutional primacy of individual property rights for development at the expense of

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the common good, has remained unchanged for years. The - so far undertaken - legislative initiatives have failed. This results in a strong, deepening crisis concerning land management, including the high costs of servicing dispersed, chaotic settlement on the outskirts of cities and tourist areas, traffic congestion, environmental damage, etc. From 2012 onwards a completely new law regulating investment and urbanization processes is under way – the Urban Planning and Construction Law. In 2016, a draft version of this document was announced, which was then protested in particular by developers and real estate market community, who seemed reluctant to proposed changes resulting in restrictions concerning freedom of construction and location.

### **Peripheries and other specific regions**

Poland is a territorially differentiated state, the most important determinants of those differences include the level of economic development, demographic issues (both population ageing and depopulation), the problem of transport accessibility as well as the overall level and quality of the provided public services. Spatial peripherality in Poland understood both as areas located near the border (internal and external EU border) and so-called inner-peripheries should be viewed in the framework of those determinants.

Peripheral areas with its specific socio-economic situation are an area of particular interest to the state. It has been expressed in the Medium-Term National Development Strategy 2020 as an strategic area “Improving social and territorial cohesion”, in the National Regional Development Strategy in Poland 2010-2020 as one of the key regional policy objectives “Building a global cohesion and preventing marginalization of problem areas” and in the National Spatial Development Concept 2030 as one of the strategic goal of spatial policy: “Improving internal cohesion and territorial sustainable development of the country”. What is more, at a national level a detailed strategy (Strategy for Socioeconomic Development of Eastern Poland until 2020) has been developed for Eastern Poland macro-region as an area with the lowest level of economic development in Poland and one of the lowest in the EU. To achieve the strategic goals emphasis should be placed primarily on activities that exploit and support differentiated potentials: on the one hand on stimulating development of centres of competitiveness and innovation, on the other hand, on strengthening the development potential of areas with weaker macroeconomic indicators.

### **Support for local economy**

Development of economy based on local resources is expressed in strategic documents on national and regional level but it does not constitute a main goal. EU financial support for local development in Poland was focused on technical infrastructure in the pre-accession period and in the first years of EU membership; then greater emphasis was placed on human resources, entrepreneurship, and currently – on innovations. Main problems related to territorial governance are: insufficient coordination between activities of institutions dealing with particular policies, as well as between activities of institutions responsible for different priority axis within a given policy; thus insufficient emphasis is placed on complexity and complementarity of investments on the particular area.

Complicated procedures of projects settlement are a barrier for small local undertakings – ease of project settlement instead of effectiveness is sometimes a decisive factor in choosing a project.

Deficits of bridging social capital in some rural areas hindered effective cooperation of entities for local development. Such instruments like National Rural Network, LEADER or CLLD contribute to decrease of such deficits. Increasing attention is paid to networking of pro-development initiatives/projects (supporting clusters, technological parks etc.). A positive effect of European policies is also increase of interest of different local stakeholders (entrepreneurs, NGOs) in participation in territorial governance, for example in building local development strategies. Local self-governments have acquired, in an evolutionary way, skills of strategic planning and conducting local policy in relation to higher-level policies. However, in the first years of EU membership strategic planning was weak, for example almost all local communities planned development of tourism (the role of tourism in local economies was overestimated).

A relatively new phenomenon in rural space of Poland, related to European energy policy, is an intensive development of renewable energy, especially wind energy. Inefficiency of spatial planning system has resulted in numerous social conflicts and legal cases concerning location of investments in this field. Until 2016 location of wind farms in Poland was possible on the basis of location *Decision* on Conditions of Development and Spatial Management (without local spatial management plan). Even if wind farms were located on the basis of spatial plan, most often there were small plans encompassing only the wind farm area, prepared especially for the particular investment and often also financed by the investor (contrary to the idea of spatial planning). The level of noise (within the audible range) was the only criterion deciding about the distance from wind farm to residential buildings. Many wind farms were built less than 500 m from houses. A new law concerning wind energy was introduced in 2016. It allows for location of wind farms only on the basis of local spatial plans. The minimal distance from wind farm to houses and protected areas was defined. The new, very restrictive rules of wind farm location have significantly limited wind energy development in Poland.

### **Transport infrastructure and accessibility**

In comparison to other Central and Eastern European countries, Poland has had an extremely prolonged gap in the implementation of significant transport investments. The stagnation started around 1980 and in fact lasted until the accession to the European Union. Under these conditions, the emergence of the European Union support for new large-scale undertakings (commencing with the pre-accession ISPA program) has resulted in a rapid, though often chaotic, intensification of investment activities. Due to the inertia of spatial planning, there were implemented investments planned in the 1970s and not the ones most needed in a fast-growing market economy. In the two consecutive EU funding periods (2004-2006 and 2007-2013), solely a part of initial plans was achieved. At the beginning of the second post-accession financial perspective (2007-2013), an increased attention was paid to the requirement of clearly defined objectives concerning given investment. In strategic documents formed at state level this was reflected while compiling the up-ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report



dated National Spatial Development Concept 2030. In spite of mentioned obstacles, the expansion of a road network has begun to take place (highways and expressways) characterized by an increasing spatial cohesion. Considerably less spectacular successes have been achieved in terms of rail network development (mainly due to institutional barriers within railway companies). In the pre-accession period as well as in the 2004-2006 programming period, large transport investments were conducted centrally within the framework of the Transport Operational Program. In 2007 – 2013 along with the current 2014-2020 periods the largest undertakings were implemented within the Operational Program Infrastructure and Environment. At the same time, other transport investments were carried out with the support of Regional Operational Programs (16 Voivodeships) and the Operational Program Development of Eastern Poland.

Poland was the largest beneficiary of the EU structural support in transport. The overall value of transport projects in both financial perspectives (2004-2006 and 2007-2013) exceeded EUR 28 billion, of which vast majority were allocated for the purpose of road investments. Considering railway infrastructure, the largest investments were excessively time-consuming and thus were continued with the means of consecutive financial perspectives. Furthermore, almost all undertaken investments were modernizations of existent infrastructure and no new investments were implemented. The specificity of managing EU funds in the transport sector in Poland was reflected by a significant share of agglomeration projects (e.g. metro in Warsaw, tram lines), ports (facilities in Gdańsk, Gdynia, Szczecin and Świnoujście) and also by 2015 expansion of almost all existing airports in Poland, as well as construction and launching two new ports for regular flights (in Modlin and Lublin). As a result of described investments, there was a significant increase in the level of potential accessibility indicators across the country.

The spatial planning inertia and long procedures resulting from the Planning Act (2003) contributed to the necessity of enacting new regulations to refine implementation of transport investments. Most of new roads, railways and other facilities have been based on these documents. Change in legislation has improved the investment process, but simultaneously "detached" the infrastructure planning from other forms of land management, in particular including development of housing and establishing new large traffic generators (shopping centres). The lack of local spatial management plans resulted in cases in which, based on Decision on Conditions of Development and Spatial Management, areas reserved for future transport infrastructure were being occupied.

Considering the local level, there has been identified an issue of poor impact of local documents (Study of Conditions, Local Plan) on the development of infrastructure. Transport infrastructure elements are taken into account in local spatial management plans, but this does not imply their implementation. In large cities, problems are also generated by outdated local spatial management plans developed under different circumstances (prior to commencing investments supported by the EU funds). These are an obstacle in changing communication priorities (e.g. preferences for public transport, cycling infrastructure).

In case when a given investment has been qualified for funding within cohesion policy, its implementation is accelerated. However, at the same time it is deprived of developing variants and optimization. The schedule for preparing documentation fosters imposing costly, often unthinkable solutions.

### **Natural and cultural heritage**

In the years 2000-2016, the overall situation in terms of natural and cultural heritage protection has improved considerably. On the other hand, intensification of threats has been evident. Major changes have taken place in the nature protection system, which after Poland's accession to the EU, has been enriched by the Natura 2000 network, officially in operation since 2004. Although all forms of nature protection cover 32.5% of the country's territory, the natural heritage and landscape protection is not assured in all respects by these means. Area of protected landscape is a relatively ineffective form of nature protection, representing 23% of Poland's area and 69% of all protected areas. More successful protection is implemented in national parks (1% of the country), nature reserves (0.5%) and landscape parks (8.1%) and within the Natura 2000 network covering 11.2% of the country's as SACs and 15.8% as SPAs (these areas mostly overlap). A significant change of state policy concerning nature protection has been included in the National Spatial Development Concept of Poland 2030 issued in 2012, in which one of the objectives is to enhance natural cohesion through developing ecological network, linking hotspots with a system of ecological corridors, designated at national, regional and local level. The requirement for specifying ecological corridors in the spatial planning system was introduced only regarding metropolitan areas. The improvement of nature protection can also be the outcome of mandatory execution of environmental impact assessments, increased opportunities for social participation, developed information system on natural and cultural heritage resources and generally enhanced access to information. On the one hand, numerous actions for active nature protection were implemented, while in 2001 the binding plans for the protection of national parks, landscape parks and nature reserves were withdrawn.

In terms of cultural heritage protection, cultural park has been included to the system, for which it is obligatory to compile a local plan. This newly implemented form has not found support by commune authorities and operates to a very limited extent (in the years 2002-2016 only 36 cultural parks were established). As regards to spatial planning and management, protection of cultural landscapes as well as urban and rural arrangements are taken into account to a considerably lesser extent than protection of historic objects. However, a positive aspect observed is a change of approach - from object protection to combining natural and cultural heritage protection, which in theory is facilitated by the Landscape Audit introduced basing upon the so-called Landscape Act in 2015, although no executive orders were issued to date, which indisposes application of this instrument.

Cohesion policy significantly supports actions for the means of protecting natural and cultural heritage and stimulates activity in this field. For instance, in the years 2007-2013 the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) has implemented a number of projects in the field of: developing protection plans, protective operations and other documentation mainly for Natura 2000 sites, ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

research contributing to i.a. active in-situ protection and protection with the means of channelling tourist flows. The OP DEP (Operational Program Development of Eastern Poland for 2007-2013) was a key element for nature protection under package 5 of the agri-environmental program "Protection of endangered bird species and natural habitats in Natura 2000 sites" (Fundeko, 2016). The projects have also been implemented within the Operational Program Infrastructure and Environment 2007-2013, Regional Operational Programs, LIFE+ and others as well as in the current programming period. Spatial planning and plans for the protection of national and landscape parks are theoretically the link between natural and cultural heritage. In some cases an obstacle in this regard is the statutory requirement of compliance concerning a local plan and study for conditions and directions of spatial management. However, such requirement is not always confirmed by practice due to considerable flexibility of decisions contained therein. In general, the functioning of cohesion policy with regard to spatial planning in the context of natural and cultural heritage ought to be greatly strengthened by improving coordination and enhancing coherence of undertaken synergy-oriented actions.

In spite of undertaken actions, some areas are vulnerable to re-increasing threats for preserving natural and cultural heritage. This is caused by general reluctance in applying planning protection for valuable areas and ecological corridors. Another adverse aspect in this regard is the lack of local planning requirements for the entire commune, locating transport infrastructure based on special acts, spontaneous housing development supported by administrative decisions and frequent dewatering of wetlands.

## **4. Polycentricity and suburbanization issues in Mazowieckie region**

### **4.1. Thematic issues problems**

Since the Mazowieckie Voivodeship is the most polarized region in Poland, here the issues and conflicts associated with spatial planning and cohesion policy are highly concentrated. On the other hand, this is due to the amount of the inflowing EU funds, (as an outcome of meaningful demographic potential) being one of the highest nationwide. The intensity of problems is greatest in Warsaw and its surroundings, due to vast scale of investments, real estate trade volume, land prices, speculation opportunities, etc.

The current legal system related to investing (and hence allocation of the EU funds) is inefficient and conducive to pathology. Expert evaluations in this field are unambiguously negative (Kowalewski et al. 2014). It has i.a. been emphasized that:

- there is an insufficient coverage of planning in Poland concerning local spatial development plans, especially in urbanized areas and under the process of urbanization. Furthermore, in recent years this indicator has been growing slowly (a nationwide increase from 17.2 to 29.7% in 2004-2015);
- the land management of local governments is excessively lavish. As a result, in the study of conditions and directions of spatial development of communes up to 370 thous. ha (10.4% the Voivodeship area), different types of housing (single-family, multi-family) are allowed, with a relatively low share of public service areas. On the other hand, the local spatial management plans assume the level of demographic absorption for the Mazowieckie Voivodeship to reach 4.3 million inhabitants, of which 3.1 million in the Warsaw agglomeration. Thus, the areas intended for housing many times - in certain communes up to ten times - exceed than the actual needs;
- due to the fact that the planning coverage is relatively meager, significant part of the investment is based upon Decision on Conditions of Development and Spatial Management, which are fairly discretionary and often foster corruption.

### **4.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

In planning documents operating at local level (such as study of conditions and directions of spatial management) a pressure for investment can be noticed related to development tendencies across Poland as well as chances of co-financing with the EU means. Based upon this observation, one can identify the link between EU funding and dispersion of settlement. An example of this phenomenon may be served by the commune of Lesznowola near Warsaw. Due to the possibility of obtaining EU funding for technical infrastructure and education, the entire area was equipped with utility

infrastructure and as a result, almost all, in accordance with development plans, was intended for housing development. As a consequence, demographic receptivity is several times higher than current population number (Olbrysz, Koziński 2011, Kowalewski et al. 2014).

Large number of dispersed, mostly small plots within individual farms in peri-urban areas is a very serious issue in Poland (which i.a. greatly increases the so-called internal costs of transport in agriculture - according to B. Klepacki 2006, even up to 75%). Good practice in this regard is considered to be the national land consolidation program financed under the RDP (EU policy implementation facility coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development). However, its effects are still negligible: in years 2004-2016 only 185 thous. hectares of land were consolidated, in view of the needs of not less than 1.5 million hectares). An effective solution would be compulsory land consolidation, but adverse attitudes of local inhabitants act as hindrance (for instance: locality in Otwock commune - lack of inhabitants' consent for such consolidation).

In the context of spending the EU funds, the greatest success concerning suburbanization and polycentrism in Warsaw agglomeration was subsidizing schools as sports facilities. This has positively influenced local polycentricity and increased settlement density in the vicinity of newly built objects (e.g. Mysiadło, Łazy, Nowa Iwiczna). On the other hand, there are some adverse examples: in the commune of Jabłonna, the sports complex has not exerted a positive effect due to its marginal location and poor accessibility (location of object should be evaluated while applying for investment co-financing).

EU funds were implemented to compile a series of supra-communal documents and not local spatial management plans. Surprisingly, unlike communal regulations (such as study of conditions and directions of spatial management, local plan), they emphasized the need for rational investing, economic efficiency, etc. Unfortunately, these documents were not mandatory at the stage of implementing their resolutions and provisions being the local law acts.

The issue faced by investors concerning operating difficulties in areas not covered by local spatial management plans was relatively common. For example, construction of a hotel, a recreational facility involved handing a scheme extracted from the local plan, and in case of its lack - applying for a decision on building conditions. The latter was issued by communal authorities based upon the study of conditions and directions of spatial management after quite a long time (often several months) and often indisposed applying for EU funds in a given time. Quite frequently self-government was subject to investor's lobbying and hence issuing positive decisions not justified by economic rationality, social interest or spatial order objectives.

In conclusion, the EU cohesion policy in the context of suburbanization and spatial planning has had more negative than positive effects. Spatial planning has to a certain extent depreciated and has not acted as a regulatory tool between various actors (i.e. pre-emptive actions in the context of mitigating spatial conflicts) and accomplishing spatial order objectives. This was due to the relative ease of acquiring the funds needed, but significantly overestimated in terms of investment scale. Local

governments had excessive arbitrariness in adopting plans and as a result often exaggerated projects related to water and sewage management were being financed.

### **4.3. Recommendation**

#### 1. Tendency to decentralize competence in terms of spatial planning, especially at local level

Launched by system reforms at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, the process of decentralizing spatial planning competence in Poland has proved not to be entirely effective, especially in the vicinity of largest agglomerations, including the Warsaw metropolitan area. The lowest level of government gained almost absolute power over investment processes in its territory. However, there were no adequate mechanisms for enforcing cooperation between neighboring spatial units. The hierarchy of spatial planning has been significantly weakened and hence numerous contradictions regarding documents of different levels (national, regional and local spatial policy) as well as in horizontal system. Solutions developed are strongly scattered, decentralized and non-harmonized with each other. It seems appropriate to move away from excessive decentralization, particularly in metropolitan areas, where investment pressure is greatest.

#### 2. Simplification of spatial planning instruments and procedures

This postulate is especially desirable in case of Poland and there is almost complete experts' consent in this field. Such a simplification of spatial planning instruments and procedures is to be served by the newly enacted Urban and Construction Act. However, many of its proposed solutions may turn out to be not only difficult to implement, but also may complicate investment procedures, including those related to cohesion policy. It is recommended to review provisions within the Urban and Construction Act in terms of clarity and complexity regarding further planning procedures.

#### 3. Reinforcing implementation of spatial policies and plans

There is a necessity to both accelerate operating and empower legal acts concerning local spatial planning for the entire commune or complete functional and urban systems (e.g. entire villages, opposed to selected parts). At present, the commune is not obligated to have a document that would be a local act for its whole area. There is only a study of conditions and directions of spatial management, which defines spatial policy and is not a binding local law document (its provisions should take into account local spatial management plans, but often this is not being practiced).

#### 4. Involvement of citizens and stakeholders in the planning process

Involvement of inhabitants is not a significant factor in the planning process. Public consultation, for example on procedure for adopting a local plan often seemed irrelevant to citizens (e.g. no one came to the meeting). This general trend is not caused by a lack of interest, but rather low confidence in the possibility of changing local reality (on the other hand, public opinion polls in Poland indicate a general feeling of high corruption risk) as well as weaknesses in education (virtually no spatial planning issues in syllabus).

## 5. Enhanced integration of spatial policy

It is necessary to strengthen horizontal integration of spatial policy, especially in metropolitan areas.

## 6. Impact of cohesion policy on spatial planning system in the region

The spatial planning system in the context of investment allocation and spending the EU funds in the region can be assessed critically. Based upon expert interviews, one may state that the EU funds, often spent in an unplanned and fragmented manner, could have become an accelerator of urban chaos and settlement dispersion. Part of the so-called "soft" cohesion fund projects, strengthened the process of residents' moving out from the centres to the suburbs. The solution to this issue should be clear guidelines for rational allocation of the EU funds and evaluation of real needs (land balance, forecasts, financial implications of urbanization). For example, competitions for acquiring the EU funds should require demonstrating financial legitimacy for implemented investment in relation to the number of end users. Moreover, other indicators associated with service requirements in public space in relation to built-up areas would be the solution. On the other hand, local spatial management plans "redundant" in investment area should be "extinguished" in case no development will take place and the original function (e.g. agricultural) might be restored. Another solution would be higher taxation rate for undeveloped land.

## **5. Transport infrastructure and accessibility issues in Mazowieckie region**

### **5.1. Thematic issues problems**

The Mazowieckie Voivodeship, encompassing the capital city of Poland in its territory, faces particular challenges related to the development of transport infrastructure. These include: a) strong suburbanization along with large-scale commuting to work, schools and services in Warsaw;

b) location at the east - west transit route resulting in overlapping local, national and international traffic on the same infrastructure;

c) lack of space allowing for developing route variants concerning linear investments in the vicinity of Warsaw.

Immediately prior to, and in the first decade of system transformation, the Voivodeship investment process in transport (as in the entire country) was in fact suspended. At the same time, there emerged rapid changes concerning land use, related to liberalization of the planning system, suburbanization, development of small enterprises and deconcentration of jobs (collapse of large industrial plants). Transport infrastructure has not kept pace with these processes. Areas intended for other purposes were being built up or residential investments were developed in their immediate vicinity. The redevelopment of infrastructure started after 2000 with the improved financial status of territorial self-government units and subsequently accession to the EU (benefiting from structural funds). After 2004, a highway connecting Warsaw with Łódź and Berlin was completed, half of the expressway ring road around Warsaw and parts of exit routes in other directions. Railway lines i.a. towards Gdańsk and Łódź were modernized. The Warsaw Okęcie airport was expanded. In Warsaw, the first metro line was completed and the central section of the second was built. The tram network was expanded by new fragments. A number of road sections have also been rebuilt. A new bridge was raised on the Vistula (Wisła) River. In the vicinity of the capital city, numerous Voivodeship roads were modernized. Basing upon former military airport, the Modlin Airport for low-cost lines started operating. Investments in the region outskirts (peripheral areas) were generally less spectacular. These mainly included modernization of Voivodeship roads and exchange of rolling stock in public transport to sub-regional centres. An obstacle for implementing modern transport solutions was the autonomy of local government units and difficulties in cooperation i.a. in the field of public transport management. Barriers occurred not only in the capital city area, but also in the impact zones of larger sub-regional centres.

### **5.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

Vast majority of aforementioned large investments (though not all) used the European Union funds under the national Operational Programs (at first pre-accession ISPA, later subsequent editions of the Operational Program Infrastructure and Environment). Accomplishing these investments was only ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report



possible due to adoption of special acts, which assured a quick takeover of land for investment. Completing these undertakings would not be possible under standard planning procedures within the limited EU programming periods. Low-level investments were supported by the means of Regional Operational Program.

The impact of cohesion policy upon planning conditions of transport development in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship was considerable. This emerged in the need of applying special acts, environmental regulations, as well as adapting planning documents to European policy objectives (changes in priorities). Generally, the impact of cohesion policy should be evaluated positively, especially at the macro-scale. However, according to experts' opinion after the accession to the EU, preservation of pre-determined linear investments has not been assured. This aspect is crucial as progressive settlement dispersion hindered new investment variants. Meanwhile, Natura 2000 sites for instance have often been delimited as conflicting to transport corridors planned for several decades (lack of agreement between ministries of environment and transport). This has often resulted in prolonged conflicts between the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways – local community – environmental organizations (e.g. eastern bypass road of Warsaw, exit route towards Gdańsk). The most probable outcome of such conflict was a delay in investment, considering that finding alternative routes is either impossible or very costly. Another issue was maintenance of high standards by the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways concerning technical speed on express roads, also within the agglomeration area. This impedes optimizing their routing in the built-in area (curved bends). Investment variation required by provisions of cohesion policy (through principles of developing environmental impact analyzes) has often become a fiction.

The **road and railway special acts** have accelerated investments, but at the same time they have contributed to diminishing the significance of local plan while determining the final course of new routes. In the Warsaw agglomeration, such pattern results in conflicts, mainly socially based. There has been observed a typical NIMBY effect on a regular basis. Residents' associations question environmental decisions, most often by seeking minor formal errors. The conflict involves active participation of local inhabitants directly affected by expropriation, residents affected by a given investment, the NGO's and often local government authorities. Two-stage judicial and administrative proceedings are in place, thus the possibility of blocking the investment is still high. As the special acts are in force, obstruction occurs at the initial stage when the environmental decision is being issued. Subsequent building permit is already subject to an immediate feasibility clause. Based upon the special acts a given property is under investor's ownership by law. The owner or user receives compensation later. To conclude, cohesion policy has brought spectacular development of transport infrastructure within the region. On the other hand, it has also indirectly contributed to dismantling of traditional planning systems. This process was particularly evident within the metropolitan area.

**In the field of environmental protection strong influence upon transport investments has been exerted by the EU regulations, both at the stage of planning and developing environmental impact assessments (EIA, CEA).** As a consequence, cases of changing previously planned routes

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(aforementioned lack of space for alternative routing) were marginal. However, the investment process has been essentially changed. Regulations of the European Union have forced, i.a., construction of fauna passages, acoustic screens and other pro-environmental solutions. In Warsaw, this sometimes led to questionable (often criticized) consequences such as raising soundproof screens by the streets. This was an outcome of changes in national legislation, caused by the European law, but at the same time more stringent standards than in many other EU states have been imposed.

Cohesion policy has certainly had a strong influence on the **structure and quality of transport investments in urban areas**, primarily in Warsaw. Undertaken actions were adjusted to recommendations of European transport and urban policies. This resulted in an increased preference for public transport, cycling infrastructure as well as intermodal solutions. Today, Warsaw is one of the most prominent European cities, with a significant role played by public cycling system. In some cases, selection of projects to be implemented (through competition procedure) led to non-optimal solutions due to often thoughtless criteria of ranking based upon objectives included in European policies. For instance, frequently additional points were awarded for improving traffic safety. As a consequence, new pedestrian crossings are planned in road projects even if they are not needed. This resulted in raising the overall implementation costs.

A significant constraint for the implementation of transport projects (particularly in public transport) concerned **difficulties in cooperation between Warsaw and other communes** of the metropolitan area. Certainly a desired solution enforcing such cooperation has been the Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) system applied in the current programming period. Moreover, the Voivodeship authorities have allocated additional funds for the Regional Territorial Investment (RTI) within the Regional Operational Program operating around the Voivodeship sub-regional centres (see description of good practice in chapter 10).

In experts' opinion, the expectations regarding cohesion policy in the Voivodeship were very high. The policy, however, was considered as an *ad hoc* funding source rather than support for well-thought investments. It was successful regarding key investments of large scale (at both central level and large scale projects in Warsaw). However, considering undertakings implemented at local scale, individual decisions are being criticized. In the current programming period (2014-2020), calls for road investments have been significantly limited. There has emerged a requirement that co-financed roads are now to be linked to TNT networks or investment sites. Numerous counties of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship do not meet these necessities. Thus, artificial road junctions or fictitious investment areas are established. Local planning is adapted to the Operational Programs in order to obtain the EU funding. Some of the experts claim that as a result of such actions, the cohesion policy means allocated to transport were over-scattered in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship. This was fostered by - among other determinants - political primacy of spending the entire budget (authorities are assessed on whether or not they wasted a single euro from EU funds). Therefore, product goals are dominant over result purposes.

### 5.3. Recommendation

While formulating recommendations on the use of cohesion policy funds in transport projects in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship, one ought to bear in mind that it is the richest region in Poland. Considering current economic statistics, the region will lose the right to structural funds (ERDF) after 2020. Only large investments of national importance will be co-financed (limitation of 90% of the EU average GDP calculated for the entire country). In order to counteract this, the authorities plan to divide the Mazowieckie Voivodeship into two NUTS2 units for statistical purposes (the metropolitan area of Warsaw and the remaining part). This could allow the structural support and further minor scale transport investment in peripheral areas. On the other hand, it is very important that there would be no administrative divide followed by the statistical division (NUTS units). Possible separation of governance regarding infrastructure and public transport systems would be detrimental to the proper functioning of transport system, especially taking into account considerable scale of commuting to work in Warsaw. On the contrary, it seems that in certain cases the possibility of supporting investment in the metropolitan area should be preserved, given the extent of issues (e.g. the need to further supporting modal change through large investments in urban rail transport).

According to experts' opinion, with the development of already existing transport infrastructure, changing priorities seems appropriate. Integration of investments at different levels (special support for co-operating units, further development of IDI and RTI instruments) ought to be a particularly significant criterion for selecting future transport projects. In addition, traffic volume should no longer be considered as a fundamental criterion for project selection. More important role is currently played by network systems (thus completing earlier developed systems is crucial). Strategy for Responsible Development compiled in 2017 allocates several areas threatened by permanent marginalization in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship. Improving transport in these areas should also become a priority. The scale and nature of suburbanization that has taken place in the Warsaw area has already precluded complete and efficient service only by public transport means. On the other hand, commuting to work in the capital city with private cars must be restricted. Under these circumstances, the most optimal solution is to support intermodal solutions (such as *park and ride* and others).

## **6. Peripheries and other specific regions based on Podlaskie region**

### **6.1. Thematic issues problems**

Podlaskie voivodeship is one of the economically weakest regions in Poland (as well in EU). There is one regional city – Białystok (with less than 300 thous. inhabitants) and three subregional centres of Suwałki, Łomża and Bielsk Podlaski (which are considered as potential main growth generators in this region.). The high share of areas of high ecological value is its main asset, it creates on the one hand good potential for tourism and agriculture, but on the other hand, taking into account strong investments supported by EU funds, a potential source of spatial conflicts.

Region is located in the north-east part of Poland, neighbouring with Lithuania and non-EU members: Belarus and Russia, which is not conducive to economic growth of the region, but in determines increasing of its transport functions. Moreover, preparation of these transport corridor's paths and essential infrastructure elements needs assurance for a lack of negative impact on local communities as well as on the areas of nature protection they run through (in order to avoid spatial conflicts).

Accordingly, the spatial planning process in the regions may face considerable difficulties not only stemming from general procedures, but the need to agree between environmental and non-environmental functions and the overall costs of adopting the plan (relatively high and burdensome for peripheral communes). Therefore, the share of area covered by binding Local Spatial Management Plans in Podlaskie Voivodeship is quite low, average around 16% (it differs between communes), while the Decisions on Conditions of Development and Spatial Management exceed 5 thous. yearly (in 2015).

The main challenge for territorial development and improving spatial order in Podlaskie is to strike the right balance between the need to stronger focus of public intervention on strengthening the region's competitiveness and using the development potential (diffused vs. more selective intervention), the need to enhance the intra-regional cohesion (instruments dedicated for peripheries) and the requirements to maintain of areas under high natural value in the region (NATURA 2000).

### **6.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

In the Podlaskie Voivodeship, the territorial governance system consists of the following basic documents: Podlaskie Voivodeship Development Strategy 2020, Spatial Development Plan of the Podlaskie Voivodeship (2003) and its update during preparation (2017) as well as some sectoral regional strategies (e.g. innovation). There is also important, comprehensive to regional strategy, Regional Operational Programme for Podlaskie Voivodeship 2014-2020, for planning investments financed from EU structural funds; defining the allocation of ERDF and ESF interventions in the region. The Programme has been designed as the strategic answer for the regional economic development challenges. In addition to the documents at the regional level, some of the visions of ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

regional and spatial development of the region are included at the national level documents (for activities of national importance), including Medium-Term National Development Strategy 2020, National Regional Development Strategy in Poland 2010-2020 and National Spatial Development Concept 2030, or at the supra-regional level – in Strategy for Socioeconomic Development of Eastern Poland until 2020 and dedicated operational programme.

According to the current Podlaskie Voivodeship Development Strategy 2020 there has been focus of public intervention on strengthening the region's competitiveness and unblocking the growth processes by a fuller use of competitive advantages and development potential; departure from the short-term model of top-down subsidy distribution to a model of long-term, decentralised development policies and departure from diffused intervention towards more selective (concentrated) investments (Podlaskie Voivodeship Development Strategy 2020, p. 8). At the regional level, the deficiency of endogenous growth factors is the main problem, it refers to accessibility, urban-rural development, depopulation (ageing and migration), tourism development and use of natural resources. Therefore, there has been set three interconnected strategic objectives concerning: competitive economy; domestic and international links and quality of life with two horizontal ones: High quality natural environment as the basis for harmonising human activity and nature and Technical and IT infrastructure opening the region up for investors, citizens, neighbours and tourists.

With regard to the vision for the region and the opportunities arising in and around it (EU and national policy), six types of areas of strategic intervention have been identified; this is one of the means of territorialisation. Areas identified as those locations in the region where the individual objectives of the development policy will be realised are: Białystok and its functional area, sub-regional growth centres (Łomża, Suwałki and Bielsk Podlaski located in different parts of the region), city counties, rural areas, border areas (focussing on overcoming infrastructural barriers and the development) and communes whose development is conditioned by the Natura 2000 network (resulting from the specific nature of Podlaskie which requires attention to legally protected areas).

Each of them perform other functions in local and regional development, which was reflected in different criteria for the assessment and selection of investment projects for implementation. Moreover actions to improve social cohesion in Białystok and its functional area are implemented primarily through integrated territorial investments (ITI) – designated for all regional capital cities in Poland. The integrated platform can also be used for sub-regional centres. In the remaining areas, the most effective seems to be the use of Community-Led Local Development (CLLD).

Cohesion policy plays a very important role in the development of the region, including the Regional Operational Program for the Podlasie Voivodeship (ROP). Taking into account the impact of CP on spatial planning implemented through the application of appropriate project evaluation criteria within investments financed from EU funds under ROP, one can identify attempts to stimulate spatial development in the area of:

a) integrating of cohesion policy and spatial/sectoral policies in the region (e.g. within priority axis on strengthening the potential and competitiveness of the economy of the region there are preferred activities in specific areas of business, consistent with the "Entrepreneurial development plan based on smart specializations of the Podlaskie voivodship for the years 2015 - 2020+" or local development strategies, or other local programs);

b) integrating cohesion policy and territorial governance for the areas under high natural value (e.g. stimulating the economic development of communes with protected areas through preferences for interventions in the commune, which development is conditioned by the Natura 2000 network);

c) supporting existing spatial order of the area in order to strengthen its significance (e.g. in the case of construction of logistic centres / locations of investment areas, awarding those connected to the regional transport system infrastructure (multimodal transport / transport nodes);

d) activities supporting a comprehensive approach to space (e.g. the size of the planned investment (the higher, the greater possibility for co-financing) and its integrity is checked and assessed in projects concerning preparation of investment

areas)

e) stimulating the competitiveness of the peripheral areas - economic approach (e.g. awarding implementation of strategic investments in selected areas of strategic intervention - larger cities);

f) strengthening spatial cohesion in the social approach (e.g. in projects concerning the ageing issue, preferences for towns with less than 20 thous. Inhabitants or rural areas). These are examples of the indirect impact of cohesion policy and territorial governance on space, nevertheless, there were no direct incentives implemented to develop local plans, e.g. by rewarding investments located in areas with the existing spatial development plan.

It should be emphasized that in the Voivodship, the development of tourism also leads to spatial conflicts with the natural environment, in particular with valuable natural areas that have been legally protected. Such areas are the locations of holiday and guest houses as well as tourist infrastructure equipment investments. Similarly, the important communication corridors routes in communes with legally protected areas also generate many spatial conflicts. Unfortunately, the spatial planning system under conditions of increased investment pressure caused by the possibility of financing investments from EU funds did not meet its regulatory role (in particular in the case of large infrastructure investments), that is why it was necessary to implement additional legal acts (special acts) - this applies to all regions in the country.

In the context of the relationship between spatial planning and cohesion policy in peripheral areas, there are noted some barriers to spatial planning: the system is oriented towards the implementation of fragmentary space elements, which hinders overall planning, no need to create Local Spatial Management Plans (also not including it in the project evaluation criteria) in the conditions of increased investment pressure, may lead to spatial conflicts, high overall costs and the risk of creating

plans (relatively higher in peripheral and underdeveloped regions) may "encourage" local authorities to developed new investments based on Conditions of Development and Spatial Management (especially competitive in the short-term). It should be emphasised that those barriers are mostly of systemic character (although the Podlaskie region has a relatively lower coverage rate for Local Spatial Management Plans than the national average).

On the other hand, one can observe how in peripheries strategic territorial governance has been influenced by cohesion policy through increased cooperation between territorial units (partly enforced by CP), improvement of strategic planning and planning competences mostly at the regional but also at the local level, increasing awareness among decision-makers and local actors in the sphere of needs to maintain spatial order (especially in areas with tourist function and nature protection). However, this also leads to the risk of overly dependent regional development from EU financing priorities. Nevertheless, Podlaskie as the peripheral region indicates large needs for infrastructural transport investments, as well as those related to the development of space for the needs of a potential investor (in this case it is important to verify the economic potential of investment areas and costs incurred for developing bare land - cost-effective analysis).

### **6.3. Recommendation**

For peripheral areas it can be noted as the most essential recommendations on EU cohesion policy and territorial governance/spatial planning in the area of :

- simplifying the instruments and procedures of spatial planning for increasing flexibility in stimulating development processes

In the peripheral areas, the sustainability of the spatial planning process is uncompetitive in view of the volatility of the cohesion policy priorities and the uncertainty of the financing sources for the development of local units. In particular, this concerns economically underdeveloped communes, where the possibility of ad-hoc decisions in the area of spatial planning seems to be more attractive in order to acquire potentially economically advantageous investments for a given territory, which obviously is not conducive to improving spatial order. On the one hand, the long duration of the procedures, lack of flexibility and costs of spatial planning, and on the other, the lack of a coherent, long-term vision of the development of the region may constitute the reluctance of local government units to develop local spatial management plans. And this, in consequence, may lead to solving spatial problems with the help of successive special planning acts.

- more integration of spatial planning/territorial development and cohesion policy

In the case of lagging regions there is observed a strong need to change the approach to a systemic one, including territorial governance and cohesion policy interactions in opposition to non-coordinated actions and projects leading to dissipation. It results from the strong dependence of stimulating development processes of these regions on investments financed from structural funds. Therefore, emphasising, preparing and implementing an integrated approach, starting from the national level to the local ones, is particularly essential for the next programming periods as it should be an effective ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

tool taking into account changing EU strategic priorities, as well as representing long-term interests of the local community of peripheral regions and leading to long-term regional and spatial development.



## 7. Natural and cultural heritage issues in Podlaskie region

### 7.1. Thematic issues problems

The extraordinary natural and cultural heritage of the Podlaskie Voivodeship is a conglomerate of natural environment and landscape assets with rich variety of cultural qualities. The area is distinguished by large wetlands mainly associated with river valleys, valuable forest complexes, high diversity of natural habitats and species, many of which are endangered and protected by law. 32% of the total surface is protected under the National System of Protected Areas, while 32.7% is covered by the Natura 2000 network (28.7% of the area are SPAs sites and 26.9% % are SACs sites). These nature protection systems overlap in spatial terms. Due to unique natural values, the Białowieża Forest is recognized as the World Biosphere Reserve and the only Polish natural site on UNESCO's World Heritage List. Since 2014, the Polish and Belarusian parts of the forest are part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site "Białowieża Forest". On the other hand, complicated history of this region has contributed to creating a specific cultural landscape developed on the canvas of ethnic and religious mosaics, related to the communities of Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Greek Catholics, Old Ritualists, Jews and Tatars.

These specific determinants comprise remarkable potential of the region considering expansion of tourism. However, at the same time they generate numerous constraints and issues related to development of infrastructure, housing, agriculture and forestry. In addition, the aforementioned assets considerably increase the possibility for acquiring financial measures related to cohesion policy. Therefore, an enhanced consideration of region's problems in the spatial planning system is required.

The region's authorities are in possession of documents relevant for spatial policy, spatial planning, territorial governance and cohesion policy requirements, in which protection of natural and cultural heritage is included along with documents individually dedicated to these issues. The first group consists of the Podlaskie Voivodeship Development Strategy (2013), Podlaskie Voivodeship Spatial Development Plan (updated in 2014), Detailed Description of the Priority Axes of the Podlaskie Voivodeship under the Regional Operational Program for 2014-2020. The next group of documents includes the Podlaskie Voivodeship Environmental Protection Program and Podlaskie Voivodeship Cultural Development Program. Since Poland's accession to the EU (2004), a series of new documents were developed and updated with increasing extent of thematic issues. However, consistency between them is relatively low.

Actions related to natural and cultural heritage are coordinated by authorities of central and local government, whereas owners of historical monuments are obligated to provide their protection. In the field of natural heritage, the state authority is the Regional Directorate for Environmental Protection and the Voivodeship Nature Conservationist representing the Voivodeship governor (Voivode). In regards to cultural heritage, this is primarily the Podlaskie Voivodeship Heritage Conservationist, who performs tasks on behalf of the governor. As competences of Voivodeship government

representatives and local government administration are often ambiguous or overlapping, spatial planning and territorial governance is thus often hampered.

Podlaskie Voivodeship has never been a business or industrial centre. Major development factor, fostering region's competitiveness is to increase its attractiveness basing upon natural and cultural heritage in order to expand tourism. This direction of development is seen as an important stimulus for the economic growth of the region, including creation of new jobs in tourism and service sector and economic entities related to natural and cultural heritage. Bearing in mind the specificity of the region, emphasis must be placed upon areas covered by legal protection, as reflected in the Podlaskie Voivodeship Development Strategy 2020, where specific areas of strategic intervention (ASI) were identified. These include communes, whose development is largely determined by the Natura 2000 network.

## **7.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

It should be emphasized that relations between cohesion policy and protection of natural heritage are generally better assessed and coordinated with the spatial planning than cultural heritage. This has been observed despite many weaknesses still present. In the subsequent EU programming periods, the spatial policy of the region concerning natural heritage was largely directed towards continuation of numerous environmental actions and their implementation in larger areas and natural systems (e.g. Natura 2000 network, programs addressed to valuable ecosystems in cross-border areas including the Białowieża Forest and Augustów Canal).

The key programs implemented in the Podlaskie Voivodeship in the field of natural heritage include: Operational Program Development of Eastern Poland (OP DEP), Operational Program Infrastructure and Environment (OP I&E), Regional Operational Program of the Podlaskie Voivodeship (ROP), as well as Rural Development Program (RDP). Financial means have also been acquired by the LIFE Nature, LIFE+ and other programs. For instance, within the OP I&E, protection plans for national parks were developed (including Wigierski, Narwiański, and Biebrzański National Parks). As part of the RPO, numerous operations related to the improvement of water, soil, air and landscape have been implemented in addition to documentation and research on bio- and geo-diversity. In addition, the CP supports efforts to control streams of visitors in the most valuable areas. In comparison to prior EU programming periods, territorial targeting has been strengthened, including specific needs of Natura 2000 sites.

Regarding the agri-environmental programs under the RDP, packages for the protection of endangered bird species and natural habitats in the Natura 2000 areas were of great importance to nature protection. A group of actions have been implemented in a dedicated package for preserving the landscape of Podlasie. Furthermore, the RDP allowed to enact operations related to promotion of agricultural production systems aiming to protect traditional landscape and improving the ecological awareness of rural population.

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A certain difficulty in obtaining even greater efficiency of these funds from cohesion funds is their dispersement in space

Nature packages of this program are often implemented on too small areas, or fragmentarily (they do not cover the entire valuable ecosystem), and usually targeting packages with milder protection requirements, due to farmers' preferences.

Poor spatial coordination in the protection of entire ecosystems in many cases weakens the protection of the entire valuable area. As a partial weakening of the program, it is possible to indicate the exclusion of some valuable habitats from the programs (i.a. raised bogs and transitional mires), which were previously covered by subsidies, and the current subsidy system does not include them. However, it should be noted that despite the indicated weaknesses, this system works much better than at the beginning of operations in Poland, due to better coordination between the government and the region as well as the administration and the farmer.

Natural heritage support has resulted in numerous documents and expert reports including Natura 2000 management plans, with dedicated databases, maps and standard data forms. Geospatial databases have been extended by other forms of nature protection. Research and educational activity has been expanded as well as active in-situ protection. Prepared documentation made it possible to better recognize the state of nature and needs in terms of its protection, creating the basis for a more targeted use of funds in the process of territorial management and spatial planning.

Cultural heritage protection is predominantly conducted by achieving local-scale objectives. Fund support has significantly improved the situation within carrying out inventory and documentation works, as well as renovating historic objects and creating an accessible information base on the cultural heritage of Podlasie. The weak side of managing the cohesion funds is still poor spatial coordination. Support usually applies to individual objects and objects scattered in space.

In the protection of a slightly larger area (e.g. complex of objects and their wider surrounding), local governments do not take advantage of the opportunities offered e.g. by cultural parks. Despite the fact that the government on the regional scale sees the need to create cultural parks, which is included in the "Development Strategy of the Podlasie Voivodship", local governments (municipalities) have not established any parks so far. The lack of cultural parks may also result from the need to make additional documentation, including the obligation to draw up local spatial management plans and other costs bearing.

Interactions between spatial planning and territorial governance, as well as protection of natural and cultural heritage are very complex. Regional government documents are characterized by a relative coherence. They are also consistent with documents at national level. However, the coherence between sectoral and general documents is somewhat smaller. There is a bit smaller coherence between some municipal level documents with regional level documents, including some strategies. In this case, such interactions cannot be clearly assessed. Some communes consider a significant part of the objectives, priorities and recommendations for regional level. Whereas, certain communes

take these into account to a lesser extent, mainly concerning requirements of spatial planning acts. The coherence between general and sectoral documents is also very diversified in the communes. There have been cases in the Podlaskie Voivodeship where the local spatial management plans were enacted, well-coordinated with the protection plans for the Natura 2000 areas, but eventually due to inhabitants' objections were not adopted. Considering relatively meaningful constraints for land management in Natura 2000 sites and their vicinity, many communes decide not to draw up local spatial management plans, implementing settlement expansion based upon administrative Decision on Conditions of Development and Spatial Management. Local spatial management plans, if pertain to a fragment of commune are mainly investment oriented. Planning protection afforded by local spatial management plans is still rarely implemented for the purpose of protecting natural and cultural qualities. Moreover, nature protection and cultural heritage are two distinct areas of sectoral policy and two separate management systems at regional level.

To conclude, the role of spatial planning system in the matters of natural and cultural heritage is generally of strategic and - to a lesser extent - regulatory character. The system itself is highly determined upon the lack of obligation for preparation of a plan of a regulatory nature for the entire area of commune. Therefore, theoretically, the commune may not have any local plan, as a plan that has the power of local law. Apart from a few situations concerning areas indicated in the laws for which a local plan is required, including a cultural park, however such a facility has not been enacted in the Voivodeship until 2016. Moreover, under current legal circumstances drawing up a local plan is not compulsory for any nature protection form. Since 2001, the arrangements included in the plans for the management of national parks, landscape parks and nature reserves (protection plans) are no longer obligatory binding for spatial management plans. The spatial planning system does not encompass all arrangements on thematic issues, allowing for circumvention of recommendations, enabled by the legal status. This is not always spatially coordinated, especially at the local level, often in terms of neighbouring communes, as natural structures require, despite the fact that ecological networks and corridors have been included in official plans. In terms of counteracting fragmentation of important ecosystems and ecological corridors mainly associated to the Natura 2000 network, positive changes have occurred in the planning of transport investments routes.

Attempts to ignore environmental requirements, for example when planning expressways, are no longer feasible (one of such examples was the attempt to cut off one of the most valuable peat bogs in the Rospuda Valley by expressway. However, effective intervention of the European Commission led to the government's decision to suspend this investment. The new expressway runs along an alternative route).

Legal aspects are considered already at the stage of planning and preparation of investments, resulting from the introduction of environmental impact assessments (EIA, CEA). Environmental decisions forced, i.a. construction of fauna passages and other pro-environmental solutions.

Firstly, it is necessary to point out the change in the approach towards valuable bio- and geo-diversity resources and cultural qualities. These aspects are regarded not only in terms of their protection

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imposed by legal requirements, but primarily as a basis for endogenous determinants of the region's development. One of the spectacular projects in terms of sustainable development of tourist potential based on natural conditions is the East of Poland Cycling Trail "Green Velo", which is the longest, spatially coherent, cycling route in Poland. It runs through 5 Voivodeships, of which 598 km in the Podlaskie Voivodeship. This undertaking has been co-financed by the ERDF under OP DEP 2007-2013. Numerous projects, combining sustainable local development with cross-border protection of natural and cultural heritage implemented in the Białowieża Forest may also be regarded as successful. On the other hand, financing of the Project Coordination Centre in the Białowieża Forest has not been continued in the current EU programming period. The lack of continuity assurance is the weak side of the management of the subsidy system.

An example of an undertaking combining regional tourism development with protection of cultural and natural heritage resources are the actions targeted at protecting and enhancing capability of the Augustów Canal and its surroundings to stimulate tourism of the region. These actions are of a cross-border nature (with Belarus). This case study has been further described as an example of good practice (11. Managing tourist product of the Augustów Canal). Recently, efforts have been made to include the Augustów Canal into the UNESCO's World Heritage Sites.

An interesting example of a close linkage between protection of the natural and cultural heritage with entrepreneurship is the project "Herb Corner" undertaken in Koryciny (Grodzisk commune), which confirms the positive impact of the EU funds on developing local initiatives activating communities of the underdeveloped and unattractive rural areas in the Voivodeship. The financial means have been derived from Axis 4 of the LEADER under the RDP 2007-2013. Initially, a small company was established basing on local herbs, nowadays it is a large-scale undertaking, consisting of: Herb Garden with the largest collection of medicinal and spice plants in Poland, which was awarded the status of a botanical garden (2011). This project also allowed for enacting an Environmental Education Centre specializing in regional education, a large complex of preserved historical buildings, providing educational, restaurant, recreational and leisure facilities, a commercial and traditional ecological farm. Production and storage facilities along with cultivation and purchase of herbs are being developed. This project can be considered as a good practice as it activates local labour market, supports the protection of natural and cultural heritage and additionally inspires local communities to recognize their own endogenous potential.

### **7.3. Recommendation**

Having in mind more effective use of EU support in terms of natural and cultural heritage in connection with spatial planning systems and territorial governance, as well as drawing on the previous experiences from Podlaskie Voivodeship, the following issues can be indicated:

- the current system of territorial governance and spatial planning is generally characterized by poor level of preparation in terms of coordination of projects and more effective use of funds.

It is necessary, among others, to indicate the need of better vertical coordination between given region and commune, as well as the need of improved horizontal coordination, primarily between government and self-government administration on a regional scale, as well as between communes on a local scale, which is particularly important with reference to supra-local natural structures.

- It is needed to attain better coherence between strategic and spatial planning documents that are prepared at the regional and local levels. In this context, it is necessary, among others, to work out Voviodeship programme of monument protection, since without such a document it is difficult to achieve whatever coherence with programmes for cities and communes and with spatial planning. It is crucial also to strengthen the coherence between documents of sectoral character and strategic documents, as well as with spatial management plans.
- Taking into consideration region's peculiarity, special attention needs to be focused on the areas under legal protection, especially on strategic intervention areas (OSI), and such areas include communes whose development is influenced by Natura 2000 network. These areas in particular require coordinated and systemic measures in terms of cohesion policy, territorial governance and planning.
- In view of transboundary character of Białowieski Forest and Augustowski Canal and other natural and cultural-natural systems, it is necessary to strengthen international cooperation with Byelorussia and Lithuania, and potentially to allocate greater funds for actions associated with natural and cultural heritage protection under EWT / Interreg programmes (particularly on borders of exceptionally high value in this respect).
- In view of the fact that programmes, supported by EU funds, too frequently have a spatially dispersed and point-type character, there is a necessity to change the approach by directing the actions toward systemic programmes, as well as to elaborate the mechanisms of supporting such actions. This concerns especially the entire ecosystems, ecological corridors and cultural landscapes protection.
- Improvement of effectiveness in the use of agricultural and environmental programmes for protection of valuable ecosystems requires development of systemic solution and mechanisms supporting the whole ecosystems, and not only their incidental/isolated fragments. One of the possibilities are farmers' associations from a given areas. It is purposeful to increase the number of hydrogenic habitats, and in the areas outside the Natura 2000 network, also to implement habitat programmes associated with valuable bird species.
- Common plans of spatial development for groups of communes within given functional areas can be viewed as an instrument supporting the accomplishment of better coordination and cohesion in combining the natural and cultural heritage protection with spatial planning, due to concentration of natural or natural and cultural values, to mention for instance, the region of Wigierski National Park, the region of Augustowski canal, etc. The regions valuable from

the point of view of natural or cultural heritage could become the receivers of specific part of financial support from cohesion policy ("natural and cultural Regional Territorial Investments").

- As regards natural and cultural heritage protection, it is necessary to strengthen planning protection and support for culture parks, establishment of which is a necessary condition for protection of cultural landscape and appropriate use of funds from cohesion policy.
- As regards natural heritage, it is indicated that there is a need to move away from object-oriented forms of nature protection toward the cultural landscape protection, supported by the management mechanism of financial support.
- Excessive dependence of actions upon EU funds can be perceived as a warning conclusion. The conclusion concerns mainly the formulation of new policies, programs and spatial development plans in a prospective approach, due to possible reduction of funds from CP in the future.

## **8. Support for local economy issues in Łódzkie region**

### **8.1. Thematic issues problems**

The Łódzkie region is internally diversified and the diversification of economic development is growing. Developmental challenges of local economies vary across the region. There are several functional areas in Łódzkie which face different socio-economic problems. They were defined in the main strategic document - Development Strategy for Łódzkie Region Board of the Łódzkie Region (2013).

The central situated is Metropolitan Area of Łódź consisting of the capital city of region and surrounding towns and suburban areas. There is shift of economic activity from the low-developed areas of region to Łódź and its functional area. One of the main challenges of Łódź is high share of post-industrial areas which need complex revitalisation. Second functional area is an energy-mining subregion where lignite is extracted. There are good conditions for development of industry and energy there. The region faces environmental problems related to great open-cast. A substantial challenge here is recultivation of degraded area.

A substantial part of Łódzkie region are areas of intensive agricultural production. Their most important barrier of development is unfavourable structure of agricultural land. There is need to create producers groups and develop regional agricultural markets. Tourist areas are situated along the main regional rivers and reservoirs. They have regional significance. Łódzkie, comparing to other regions, is generally perceived as not attractive for tourists. Thus, development challenges are: creating of brand image and creating of integrated tourist products.

Support for local economies comprises support for self-governments (eg. building infrastructure, arranging investment areas), entrepreneurs, farmers, networks, organisations etc. Directions and frames of support from European funds have been defined in subsequent Regional Operational Programme of Łódzkie, as well as in the country-wide documents: Rural Development Programme, Smart Growth Operational Programme and other.

### **8.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

Many barriers related to territorial governance, which hinder local development, were identified in Łódzkie region. As it is stated in the *Development Strategy for Łódzkie Region*, organizational structures of many communes (NUTS5) are not adjusted to planning activities and to modern governance. There is lack of modern systems of human resources management in local commune's offices. Self-governments often do not understand the significance of multi-annual planning of finances and strategic planning of commune's development (especially in smaller communes), as well as they lack an skills and competences in strategic planning. The influence of cohesion policy in this field was twofold. Cohesion policy forces self-governments to strategic planning. It's a positive effect – local authorities have to plan local development in their communes if they want benefit from funds.

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Thus they have to learn how to do it, they have to learn how to create long-term visions and consider development scenarios.

The negative aspect is that local strategy is very often created mainly for European funds; it is tailored to the current European guidelines/programmes instead of defining the actual long-term directions of development. Strategies are relatively often changed by self-governments in order to adjust to current possibilities of obtaining funds. Moreover, a strategy is needed to almost every project. Thus many documents are created for the same or overlapping areas. Local authorities do not give too much weight to strategies.

Expectations of voters regarding local authorities are to obtain as much European funds as possible. If local authorities do not have a real and long-term vision of commune's development, investments frequently have an accidental character and do not result from the urgent needs of the commune but from the current accessibility of funds. There was an example of two neighbouring small communes in which swimming pools were built. It's example of territorially unreasonable investments, which communes cannot maintain.

The next crucial problem is related to spatial planning. Many communes lack an local spatial development plans. In the city Łódź coverage by spatial plans is 15% - low level in relations to other big cities in Poland. Plans in the city cover mainly areas with monuments or green areas (great social pressure for preserving green sites). There are mostly very small plans. About 32% of Łódzkie region's area is covered by spatial plans (similar to country's average, Śleszyński i in. 2017).

Wind energy development is an example of problems related to spatial planning and territorial governance. In many agricultural communes local authorities perceive wind farms as a profitable source of commune's income. Wind farms are often located without plan – on the basis of Decision on Conditions of Development and Spatial Management (simplified procedure without social consultations) or on the basis of local spatial management plan which is created according to investor's intention. It causes social conflicts and protests. Almost highest (of Polish regions) number of protests against wind farms were recorded in Łódzkie (Bednarek-Szczepańska, 2016). About 13% of all legal cases before administrative courts in Poland (concerning location of wind farms) were conducted in Łódzkie.

Local authorities very often do not understand importance of spatial planning. Lack of plan is frequently even more convenient – such situation enables flexibility and arbitrariness by deciding about space. Many local authorities prefer not to have spatial plans. It's pathological phenomenon. It's very often the case that spatial plans are prepared incorrectly. In one of Łódzkie communes technical parameters of buildings and installations were overly detailed in spatial plan. In view of rapidly changing technologies this plan precluded implementation of modern building solutions, for which financing from European programmes was possible to obtain.

The next issue are relations between different actors of territorial governance. The ability of self-governments to cooperate with non-governmental organisations was insufficient in the region. The ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

influence of European policies, for example rural policy, was positive in this field. LEADER became a catalyst of territorial cooperation between NGO's, local governments and entrepreneurs in rural areas. The positive point is that almost all entitled communes in Łódzkie participated in a local action group, Only 8 (per 159 rural and urban-rural communes) didn't benefit from LEADER in the 2007-2013 programming period. As regional experts said, local associations, activists and inhabitants were in fact involved in territorial governance through LEADER. Many local action groups have played an important role in promoting culture and local heritage. Although the realized projects were relatively small (in the sense of costs), many of them were effective and important for development of rural communes, especially small and poor ones. However, bureaucracy and multiplicity of formalities accompanying implementation of projects were inadequate to their size and were a barrier to effective governance.

As it is stated in the *Development Strategy for Łódzkie Region*, cooperation between neighbouring self-governments in generating integrated supra-local projects is insufficient. The fact was also confirmed by regional experts during focus group interview. An example is difficulty in updating Regional Spatial Development Plan (2010). Local self-governments cannot reach agreement on the content of the Plan. Lack of agreement between local authorities was also an obstacle for implementation of Regional Tram project. However a good example is agreement of self-governments of several communes and counties, situated around Złoczew lignite deposit, which decided to realise together a partner project Złoczew Functional Area. They developed a common conception how to use the area and created an European-funded Strategy of Złoczew Functional Area, assuming designation of Złoczew Investment Zone.

Some other positive examples of relations between cohesion policy and territorial governance in different functional areas were identified by regional experts. In the city of Łódź a complex process of revitalisation has been undertaken. Local spatial development plans were adopted, as well as Local Programme of Revitalisation, according to the new Law on Revitalisation. It is first Polish city in which the Programme was adopted. A Revitalisation Committee consisting of different stakeholders (NGO, inhabitants, entrepreneurs etc.) was set up. A Special Revitalisation Zone was designated where rules of subsidising from city budget were defined. New regulations enable obtaining European financial support for revitalisation. Eight projects co-financed from EFRD are realised now in the central area of Łódź.

The next example is small, periphery town Uniejów, which has used local resources in an exemplary way. Intensive development of the town has occurred in past decade on the basis of thermal waters. The strategy of tourism development is consequently realised by local self-government in cooperation with local entrepreneurs. The biggest tourist projects were co-financed from European funds - they have allowed the town to develop so fast and spectacularly. There are more and more private investments around the town and one can observe creating of small tourist „region”. Continuity of adopted policy with the aid of European funds allowed to build strong local economy.

### **8.3. Recommendation**

1. Local governments authorities should be educated to understand the importance of strategic planning for long-term development, not only as a way to obtain European funds. More emphasis should be placed on territorialisation of strategic planning and on the relations between strategies, spatial policy and spatial plans.
2. More emphasis should be placed on territorial complexity and complementarity of initiatives and projects for local economies. Monitoring committees of regional operational programmes could be responsible for evaluation of complementarity of projects realised within different priority axis on the same area. Undertakings which assume territorial cooperation and creating territorial networks should be promoted, especially in functional areas.
3. The common logic of thinking about support for local economy (the more money the better) should be changed to the logic of effectiveness.
4. The existing system of spatial planning allows to locate controversial investments which have a significant environmental impact without local spatial plan, but arbitrarily – on the basis of decision and without social consultation. This often happens in practice. One should counteract such practices, promote inclusion of different stakeholders in decision making and support consultative and participative undertakings. Such activities may contribute to conflicts prevention.
5. As many experts claim, a profound reform of spatial planning system in Poland is necessary because the existing system has failed, often it constitutes a barrier for development and self-governments have to find various ways how to deal with its weakness and limitations.

## **9. Transport infrastructure and accessibility issues in Łódzkie region**

### **9.1. Thematic issue problems**

The Łódzkie Voivodeship is located centrally in the transport system of Poland. After 2004, the region has become one of the greatest beneficiaries of the road network development across the country. As an outcome of reproducing infrastructure development plans originating from times of centrally planned economy, the main longitudinal route (A1 motorway) connects the ports of Gdańsk and Gdynia with the industrial area of Upper Silesia. In consequence, the A1 motorway junction with the latitudinal A2 (Berlin-Warsaw-Belarus border) was located in the suburbs of Łódź. Furthermore, during the 2007-2013 financial perspective, the S8 expressway (Wrocław - Warsaw section) route was altered, so that eventually it also runs in the vicinity of Łódź. These decisions and subsequent viable investments resulted in a great improvement of road accessibility of entire Voivodeship and its capital city. At the same time, Łódź has remained situated peripherally in relation to the national rail network. Only the railway line to Warsaw has been modernized. A large, modern Łódź Fabryczna train station was built, which is expected to be part of the new high speed rail route from Warsaw to Wrocław and Poznań via Łódź (the so-called "Y" Line). However, this investment is currently suspended (due to immense costs) despite its inclusion in the National Spatial Development Concept of Poland 2030. Numerous inner-city road investments have been implemented in Łódź (such as the east-west route). The Łódź - Lublinek Airport is currently of marginal importance, i.a. as an outcome of improved road connecting in the Voivodeship with other airports, especially the Warsaw-Okęcie Airport. Construction of the A2 motorway between Łódź and Warsaw, with the simultaneous change of the S8 route, contributed to overloading this road section with traffic. Its technical parameters are not sufficient for such large stream of passenger cars and trucks. Establishing the motorway junction contributed to development of adjacent areas, particularly in logistics sector (vicinity of Stryków junction), which brought additional challenges to the spatial planning system.

According to experts' opinion an issue typical to the Łódzkie Voivodeship was termination of self-government planning offices during the transformation period. Institutional structures of regional planning service have been under reconstruction for the last 5 years. Moreover, the experts claim that the tools used by the Voivodeship Marshal in the planning system are too weak. An example might be the concept of a regional tram linking Łódź with towns in the outer zone of agglomeration (Zgierz and Pabianice). The initiative failed due to administrative obstacles. As in other Voivodeships, the fundamental problem is the difficulty of establishing cooperation between territorial self-government units.

### **9.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

As the most significant positive impact of cohesion policy on the process of spatial planning in the Łódzkie Voivodeship, the experts point at both development of consultation and mediation procedures. Comprehending certain terms along with undertaking actions has become similar to that ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

commonly used in Europe (before this was an issue in the region). A major, direct influence of cohesion policy has also been exerted upon environmental issues (variants in transport investments, environmental impact assessment and social consultation at various phases).

Nevertheless, assessment of relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning and transport processes was more critical in the Łódzkie Voivodeship in comparison to the Mazowieckie Voivodeship. It was emphasized that there is still no effective urban policy, while the EU Urban Agenda poorly corresponds to the Polish circumstances. This is of particular importance in such cities as Łódź, with a considerable decapitalization rate of housing stock, while revitalization remains one of the key challenges (including revitalization of post-industrial areas). Ambitious documents are being developed, such as study for the metropolitan area, unfortunately lacking appropriate legal power. Aforementioned deficiencies are of lesser impact on the planning system in other Voivodeships where fully operating public planning services have been maintained. In general, the experts point out that the approach towards cohesion policy in the Łódzkie Voivodeship was reactive. It was necessary to create documents for the purposes of spending the EU funds. These were in fact enacted but were based on existing funding capability rather than real long-term spatial development needs.

Development plan for the Łódzkie Voivodeship was enacted in 2010 and its content is not directly related to cohesion policy. On the other hand, according to experts, certain aspects referring to cohesion policy have been included in the Voivodeship Development Strategy. As a document of socio-economic significance, the Strategy is fundamental to the Regional Operational Program. The Łódzkie Voivodeship Strategy acts as good example at national scale because it assumes territorializing regional policy. Moreover, the Strategy defines functional areas (tourist, industrial and agricultural regions). This approach is useful for efficient spending of EU funds. Good examples are also provided by actions implemented with the use of cohesion policy funds in certain local government units. This might be exemplified by the commune of Stryków, with the junction of A1 and A2 motorways. Numerous logistic investments are being located here. The Mayor of Stryków (area fully covered by local spatial management plans) draws attention to the variability of cohesion policy priorities between the EU programming periods, while these changing approaches have not corresponded to the actual needs of communes. In addition, the Mayor notes that procedures for developing plans are changing at a slower rate than technologies (e.g. regarding sewage infrastructure). Altering the local plan is very expensive. Considering these determinants, a smaller commune with no plan is more likely to develop its infrastructure in line with cohesion policy.

On the other hand, in the city of Łódź, where the coverage by plans is as low as about 15% of territory, local documents are primarily in power to areas requiring specific protection (e.g. environmental, cultural heritage). On the contrary, investment areas where transport network ought to be created are deprived of such documents. The plans therefore comply with protective function, but not developmental one. An obstacle in implementing projects supported under cohesion policy within the region is also the inconsistency of local spatial management plans at the borders of communes. In cases where the issue of cooperation between local government units (within the metropolitan area of

Łódź) was successfully overcome, this was instantly apparent with positive effects. These for instance include improved public transport between Stryków and Zgierz (commuting to work in one direction and to schools in the opposite). However, many experts claim that good practices mainly provide examples of how local governments deal with the shortcomings of the Polish planning system. Cohesion policy, in this case acts as an important catalyst for such action (via access to financial resources, it is mobilizing in breaking down local institutional barriers).

Transport infrastructure implemented under the ROP is based on the transportation plan of the Voivodeship. However, at the stage of its developing, the issue faced is the appropriate prioritization of the investment. Despite extensive procedure, as in most other Voivodeships, points are awarded to projects, i.a. for the degree of their preparation so far. As an outcome, regional or local authorities develop projects at their discretion and thus indirectly forcing their later support under cohesion policy.

To conclude, according to experts' opinion, in case of the Łódzkie Voivodeship objectives of cohesion policy have not resulted in a more efficient spatial planning. Although funds were gained for the implementation of numerous projects, the inertia in terms of implementing system solutions has remained. Transport projects implemented in the Voivodeship within the framework of the centrally administered Operational Programs must certainly be evaluated best. In case of small scale undertakings, including those conducted in the Łódź Metropolitan Area, the planning system was rather an obstacle to effective spending of funds. Examined experts pointed to this issue to a greater extent than in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship. Problems are in general better dealt with by richer communes, which are more likely to introduce innovative solutions. Their spatial planning (including transport infrastructure planning) is more flexible and pro-development. On the other hand, spatial planning in less prosperous communes is reactive.

Certain problems have also been spotted with regard to planned investments at the state level (co-financed by the Operational Program Infrastructure and Environment). By the means of current EU programming period, construction of the western express bypass road for Łódź is planned. In case when motorways are already surrounding the city from the east, north and south, this investment cannot be rationally justified considering transit and inter-agglomeration traffic. However, taking into account the needs of the Łódź Metropolitan Area, such undertaking is crucial. The tender for this investment was canceled in 2017 because all submitted offers exceeded the estimated budget. A new tender (currently under way) has been announced, with altered assumptions, eliminating the construction of two previously planned nodes. Abandoning the idea for developing these nodes will limit the usefulness of this route for the region's inhabitants. This case provides evidence for the poor integration of national and regional objectives in transport policy implemented with assistance of cohesion policy.

### **9.3. Recommendation**

- As in other regions of the country, the key to efficient use of the EU funds in transport sector is enhanced cooperation between local authorities. However, current territorial governance as

well as spatial planning system is not conducive to partnership. Experience gained by the Łódzkie Voivodeship proves that adequate planning service is crucial. The quality of such utility determines absorption of both financial resources and good practices streaming along with the EU funds.

- A valuable guideline may be to facilitate changes in the already enacted local spatial management plans, which allow for a more responsive development of local transport systems.
- Coverage rates by local spatial management plans do not always reflect the actual situation in this field. It is significant what types of sites are in possession of valid documents. It is recommended to cover areas with plans, in which transport infrastructure is being developed as well as their vicinity. Even in cases when large-scale investments are conducted with the means of special acts, the smaller systems (e.g. distributing traffic from highway junction in investment areas) must be implemented by local authorities. These ought to be developed prior to other forms of land management. This is only possible by including them in local spatial management plans.
- In addition, as in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship, the integration of investments at various levels should be an important criterion for the selection of future transport projects (supported under cohesion policy). The ITI instrument should be developed and whenever possible the RTI ought to be introduced (Mazowieckie Voivodeship might be the role-model in this regard).
- Also in the Łódzkie Voivodeship, the volume of traffic should not be the fundamental criterion for selecting road projects. More significant are network determinants (completing the systems built earlier).
- Internal variations within administrative regions (NUTS2 units) plead in favor of enhanced territorializing future cohesion policy. This could be served by for instance functional areas delimited in the Development Strategy for the Łódzkie Voivodeship.
- Large-scale transport investments assessed rather positively (especially road investments) provide evidence for the need of improving synchronization of undertakings, particularly in the context of altering prior plans. The relocation of the S8 expressway has brought certain benefits to the western part of the Łódzkie Voivodeship. At the same time, it greatly increased the current and anticipated traffic on the Łódź - Warsaw motorway. However, technical parameters of this almost simultaneously implemented investment have not been changed.
- Integration of transport policy objectives at different levels (implementing diverse Operational Programs) is also important. Realization of large investments (such as the western expressway bypass road of Łódź), based on special acts has detached them from local planning. The needs of local communities (such as e.g. suitable number and location of road junctions) are not considered sufficiently.





## **10. Regional Territorial Investment: Mazovian rail/road transfer node in Siedlce**

The Regional Territorial Investment (RTI) is a new instrument of territorial approach to regional development and was initially considered as an "experiment". This mechanism is supposed to inspire local governments to jointly implement a number of investments that together will create a systemically (functionally) coherent project. In the Mazowieckie Voivodeship the RTI have been formed in the subregions of Płock, Siedlce, Ciechanów, Radom and Ostrołęka. In each subregion, the RTI leader is the main city. The subregional centre is also intended to coordinate the investment plan for each RTI.

Investments planned under the RTI will be financed under the Mazowieckie Voivodeship Regional Operational Programme (the budget of € 2.1 billion). The planned operations will be implemented by either local governments or partnerships – these may be established in any form. Partnerships should be formed in response to common challenges and necessity for enacting a collaborative vision of development. The projects within RTI are intended to be integrated in form, meaning that these will be groups (bundles) of projects that will jointly solve a given problem and support the development of a subregion.

Under the RTI, the European Commission introduced a tool known as Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) serving for functional areas of cities. In the Mazowieckie Voivodeship, there are ITI's for the Warsaw agglomeration (the budget of € 165 million) and Radom (as of 2016). The task of defining the functional area was assigned to the RTI leaders.

According to the guidelines by the European Commission and Ministry of Infrastructure and Construction both the RTI and ITI are supposed to act as a tool for urban development, but in a functional sense, i.e. going beyond their administrative borders, however within given area justified by research and analysis. This resulted from relevant documents at supra-local level, studies and additional analyses.

In order to obtain funding, projects take part in competitions specially announced for the RTI/ITI (within the so-called problem areas, i.e. Strategic Intervention Areas). Taking part in these competitions does not preclude applying for the EU funds under other calls - open to all.

Projects selected in the competition announced for the RTI, similarly as other proposals, must receive a positive rating in line with the criteria adopted by the Monitoring Committee.

Although the list of projects implemented under the RTI and ITI in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship is not yet closed (enrolment is conducted since June 2016), these instruments act a good example of integrated spatial planning. Their most desired feature is the promotion of investment location in connection with natural functional areas such as daily urban systems. This is crucial both in terms of polycentrism, improving the efficiency of areas with dispersed settlement as well as inter-communal cooperation.

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As an example of a successful RTI in Mazowieckie Viovodeship a bundled investment "Establishment of Integrated Multifunction Passenger Exchange Node in Siedlce. Expansion and modernization of the associated communication system of the city and the subregion of Siedlce" can be considered. The bundle consist of following initiatives:

1. expansion of communication infrastructure in the vicinity of the existing railway station in Siedlce,
2. construction of a bus interchange centre on the E 20 railway line located in the TEN-T, linking it to the north and south of the city and improving the public transport system in the area,
3. modernization of the communication system in the adjacent districts, which is spatially linked to the TEN-T network,
4. establishment of the transfer centre in Sokolow Podlaski, which is spatially linked to the Siedlce Node.

The main design (1.) consists of tunnel construction and III stage of the inner-city ring road construction (directly connected to the railway line located in the TEN-T network and indirectly to the national road no.2 located in the TEN-T network). Realization of the aims to improve accessibility of the city centre and rail/road transfer node. Project realisation receives significant supplementary payment from UE. High evaluation of the project was related among others to good cooperation between partner cities and to the connection to planning and strategic documents (e.g. Sokołów Podlaski, one of the partner cities, will receive 5.6 mln EUR (80%) supplementary payment due to the developed revitalization program). Development of the overall RIT is to receive around 50 mln EUR supplementary payment. Construction is to be finished in fourth quarter 2018.

## 11. Managing tourist product of the Augustowski Channel

Augustowski Channel is a historic 102 km long facility, with several sluices, connecting the Vistula River and Niemen basins, located in the north-eastern part of Poland and partly in the territory of Belarus. The Augustowski Channel is the outstanding example of Polish civil engineering of the early nineteenth century. In recent years it was gradually renovated. It has been listed as a part of the European Route Of Industrial Heritage.

The canal runs through natural and culturally valuable areas - the Augustów Primeval Forest (one of the largest forest complexes in Poland) and wetland meadows and marshes of the Biebrza Basin. It is also one of the most important tourist attractions of the Podlaskie Voivodeship, taking advantage of tourist and recreational values (water sports, kayaking, sailing) combined with the development of local (peripheral) economies based on tourist services, yacht industry and fisheries (see: Podlaskie Voivodeship Development Strategy 2020). Nevertheless, intensive tourism with the absence of adequate quality infrastructure poses a serious threat to the natural environment in the region.

Territorial management in the region is based on undertaking integrated actions for the development of Augustowski Channel and creating a common tourism product development strategy, which, consequently, improves the attractiveness of tourism and recreation of the communities around the Channel and economic activation of these areas. This is on the one hand a strategy requiring long-term actions, and on the other hand – requiring actions taking into account the various aspects of space. For this purpose, prior to Poland's integration with the EU, pre-accession funds (PHARE) were used to improve the technical condition of the existing Channel infrastructure. Later, using regional EU funds, the main focus was on the construction or modernization of sports, tourism and leisure facilities. Actions at the level of the country, the Eastern Poland macro-region or in the framework of cross-border cooperation can be considered as the accompanying measures for regional development vision, e.g. taking heavy traffic transit (Via Baltica route) outside one of the main tourist centres of the region - Augustów; setting Eastern Poland Cycle Route along the Channel (Green Velo), financed by the European Regional Development Fund and strengthening the cross-border infrastructure in the Channel area, financed by the Cross Border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine.

At first, in the financial perspective 2007-2013, in spite of the lack of institutionalized cooperation between local and regional self-government units, the particular strategic and programme framework for the development of the area around the Augustowski Channel has been outlined. During this period, several documents of supra-local character were developed, i.e. the Strategy of integrated branded tourist product Augustowski Channel as an element of international product, Strategy of the development of the tourist product Water Route of King Stefan Batory Wisła - Żerański Channel - Zalew Zegrzyński - Narew - Biebrza - Augustowski Channel (Neman). At this stage, their implementation was limited, those documents were used mostly to popularize the problem of the region and present the need for the complexity of territorial management in this area.

During this period, support for the development of tourism related to the use of natural and cultural heritage (improving tourism attractiveness and upgrading the tourism capability) was initiated on the basis of the priorities of the regional operational programme (ROP). Within the framework of priority axis no. 3 "Tourism and Culture Development" of ROP, priority for grants in a competitive procedure was given to investments in the most attractive areas in terms of tourism, including in the Channel region. In addition, the list of key projects planned for implementation in the non-competitive mode was defined; over 10% of EU funds in priority axis no. 3 of ROP were allocated to projects located in the area of the Augustowski Channel (Augustów and Płaska communes). These investments addressed the tourism-related issues in a comprehensive manner by the construction of walking-cycling-ski paths, the development of beaches and green areas, and the construction of a tourist and sport centre in order to increase the quality of tourist services and to extend the tourist season.

In the current financial perspective 2014-2020 priority actions in the Augustowski Channel are focused on supporting enterprises and pursued with consistency within the support of EU funds within the ROP framework. In a competitive procedure priority for grants was given to investments in communes with NATURA 2000 areas, which also allows to invest in business related to tourism around the Augustowski Channel. There was also developed a concept of revitalization of the waterway between the Great Mazurian Lakes and the Augustowski Channel in the Podlaskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie voivodeships.

Nevertheless, the most important change in territorial management of the Augustowski Channel area is the organization of management. In 2016 a Polish-Belarusian working group on the development of the Augustowski Channel was formed. It consists of representatives of the Polish and Belarusian side, including regional authorities, representatives of the State Forests and national park, local self-governments units and the Regional Water Management Board. The aim of the group is to develop the tasks and co-operate in order to maximize the potential of the Channel in terms of tourism and promotion. Some of the postulates of the group such as: a) changing the status of the Rudawka-Lesnaja river border crossing and introducing the possibility of pedestrian and cycling crossing point; b) extend the Green Velo cycle route to link the cycle paths along the entire Channel on both sides of the Polish-Belarusian border, and in Lithuania; has been considered.

Managing the Augustowski Channel presents a spatial planning practice which has evolved over years. The transformation of the strategic approach to the development of Augustowski Channel area may be regarded as the good example of bottom-up change in the territorial management. There has been a switch in coordination and communication in a mid-term which led to formalising cooperation between authorities at local and regional level in Poland and Belarus. These activities were dictated by an increased investment activity resulting from the availability of EU funds and increased pressure to establish consistency in those activities.

In conclusion, this is an example of consistent implementation of actions for reconstruction of the facility and modernization of areas around the Channel, a coherent vision of the Augustowski Channel utilisation and revitalization of adjacent territory, in cooperation with units on local and provincial level, ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

bottom-up local initiatives, as well as inter-institutional cooperation between Poland and Belarus, including the Niemen Euroregion forum. Number of related activities in several communities in Poland and in Belarus, such as:

- modernization of tourist infrastructure (electric water ski lift, tourist paths, bicycle paths),
- extension of the tourist season including broadening the tourist offer (cross-country ski trails, development of sanatorium facilities),
- strengthening cross-border tourism (opening of the first river crossing point Rudawka-Lesnaja)

has led to the creation of a tourist product of international importance. Also, the activities carried out so far result in further initiatives aimed at strengthening the tourist and economic functions of these areas, taking into account protection of the natural heritage.

## 12. Conclusions

Within Polich case study 3 regions were analyzed (NUTS2; Mazowieckie, Łódzkie i Podlaskie), which de facto represented all thematic issues related to in which all thematic issues corresponding to the priorities of the EU 2020 Territorial Agenda were represented. They illustrate well the diversity of spatial problems occurring in Poland. In some metropolitan areas (including Warsaw in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship) we have been dealing with rapid economic development in the last 20 years, causing strong spatial pressure (creation of suburbanization zones). In others, due to structural transformations (Łódź), urban areas revitalization became a challenge. At a greater distance from the metropolis, internal peripheries developed that required support for local development (including Łódź). Other problems occur in the macroregion of Eastern Poland, where peripherality is associated with long-term depopulation (podlaskie region). Under these conditions, the challenge was to protect valuable natural and cultural heritage (Podlasie). In all regions of Poland (especially Mazowieckie and Łódzkie Voivodeship) intense development of transport infrastructure takes place.

Poland, including the regions analysed, obtained significant funds from the EU cohesion policy in 2004-2016. Their utilisation is generally rated high. The strong relationship between the implementation of cohesion policy objectives and spatial planning and territorial management was observed. This relationship was related to various problematic areas, which corresponded to individual operational programs. It was clearly visible especially in:

- planning conditions (including barriers) for the implementation of EU investments in the national space;
- adaptation activities (including the so-called “special purpose acts”) changing the system in terms of the needs resulting from the efficient spending of EU funds;
- dependence of certain investments on the implementation of European law directives.

Furthermore, there was also an indirect influence on the discussed relationship, among others related to general economic development and the enrichment of local societies (partly as a result of Poland's accession to the EU). It is not without significance that in the period directly preceding the EU membership, significant institutional changes, partly related to the planned accession, took place in the Polish planning system. These included the reform of the administrative system (1999) and the new Spatial Planning and Land Development Act of 27 March 2003.

In relation to the priorities of the EU 2020 Territorial Agenda, the impact of cohesion policy at the national level in Poland was powerful in the areas of transport infrastructure development and accessibility improvement, as well as in relation to the development of peripheral areas (see Table 2). At the regional level, EU support was important in the development of transport as well, and also in the support for peripheral areas. In the local scale, the role of cohesion policy can be also observed in the category of polycentric development and suburbanisation.

Regarding the **polycentric settlement system development** and counteracting excessive and uncontrolled suburbanisation, the Polish planning system was not able to stop unfavorable spatial phenomena. It was not favoured by the far-reaching planning autonomy of basic local government units (communes and municipalities). Under these circumstances, the availability of EU funds in some cases additionally compounded the problems. Some co-financed investments were created in areas without the legally bounding development plans (but based on a decision on building conditions), therefore in result they were contributing to the increase of spatial chaos. Relatively easy access to financial resources sometimes caused rescaling of investments. Co-financing of water supply and sewage systems resulted in the reduction of potential costs related to the construction of single-family houses far from densely developed areas. In the context of development dispersion and suburbanisation, EU investments had an adaptive character (e.g. providing utility infrastructure) rather than mitigating. Analysis of the Polish case study proves that it would be advisable to modify the competition criteria, in some operational programs (especially in metropolitan areas), so that the co-financing of the investment depended on the existence of local development plans and on the analysis of the future use of constructed facilities (e.g. sports facilities).

The role of the planning system as a barrier to efficient implementation of **cohesion policy transport projects** was most evident in the urbanized areas, especially in the vicinity of Warsaw and other biggest cities. The suburbanization process, related to the drawbacks of the planning system has directly affected the difficulty in conducting transport projects. Due to enacting special acts, the investments were successfully completed in line with the EU policies (especially in terms of environmental protection, but also in terms of mobility changes - mobility plans). A very positive aspect was the introduction of the ITI and RTI instruments and coercion of local governments to cooperate, particularly in public transport projects. In case of investments implemented at minor scale, including those located more peripherally, project selection may often raise doubts. Planning transport investments should ultimately be re-integrated with local planning. In case of selected large linear investments (for which implementation of route variants is practically no longer possible) and spatial (such as NIMBY) conflicts indispose their accomplishment (e.g. the eastern bypass road of Warsaw), it is necessary to maintain a dedicated implementation path. In the areas located further away from large metropolises (Warsaw, Łódź), funds allocated for the modernization of regional roads and railways were sometimes overly dispersed (which was the result of a kind of egalitarianism, according to which each part of the province should get some investment...). Thus, access to cohesion policy support for major transport projects in metropolises must be flexible. This applies both to the criteria of profitable units (cities with high nominal GDP per capita may not be able to realize large investments themselves, especially in public transport), as well as rigorous preferences only for specific modes of transport (intermodal solutions are often the only ones that can increase the system's efficiency).

European funds have played an important role in **supporting local economies**, by supporting both self-governments (eg. development of infrastructure) and entrepreneurs, NGO's and other local entities. Effectiveness of the support system was limited because of some problems. (1) Territorial

coordination and complementarity of projects under different EU programmes and priorities was insufficient, especially in former programming periods. (2) A prevailing approach of public administration was to maximise the amount of acquired external funds. Too little attention was paid to analysis of their effectiveness for local development. (3) There are insufficient links between strategic planning and spatial planning, (4) Frequent changes of development strategies created by self-governments (their adaptation to the current EU priorities) with a simultaneous lack of spatial plans does not favour consistent implementation of one particular development path, but rather it favours incidental location of investments and occurrence of socio-spatial conflicts. However, it must be stated that from the beginning of Poland's membership, local and regional authorities have gained experience in strategic planning. There is a growing „socializing” of territorial governance at regional and local level (involvement of different actors). Under the current programming period instruments facilitating territorial complementarity of projects are introduced (eg. ITI, CLLD). The operating EU programmes offer instruments which may improve territorial governance but their appropriate use depends on good local leadership and willingness to cooperate between stakeholders.

Regarding the activation of **peripheries and other specific region**, in Poland a separate operational program was dedicated to the five regions with the lowest income (based on NUTS2, including the analysed Podlaskie Voivodeship). For this purpose, the Development Strategy was prepared covering the area of the five regions, and other documents later, e.g. Transport Plan. The effectiveness of these planning tools can be critically assessed. Each of the regions was characterized by other territorial problems, and their internal diversity was significant. It seems that it would be more desirable to develop programs for precisely designated smaller problem areas (areas at risk of marginalization, set out in the new Responsible Development Strategy). On the other hand, a positive effect of European policies is increase of interest of different local stakeholders (entrepreneurs, NGOs on the peripheral areas) in participation in territorial governance, for example in building local development strategies.

Moreover, since the beginning of EU integration, there has been, partially induced by cohesion policy (as well as dependent on this policy), the process of learning and improving the territorial management, which is also related to the quality of the management and human capital at the regional and local level of self-government units. Territorial governance in peripheral areas is struggling with the punctuality of investments implemented with EU funds, partly due to the lack (or non-existence) of a coherent vision of spatial and economic development of the region (despite the appropriate documents at the strategic and operational level), as well as the willingness to use available structural funds (in particular, the so-called soft projects), despite the lack of significant effects for the region. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that with each subsequent EU financial perspective, integration of territorial governance and cohesion policy is more efficient. There is a positive, gradual change in approach to the use of EU funds and spatial management for system activities - selective intervention, such as: introducing bonuses for investments financed from EU funds in defined areas of strategic intervention depending on the purpose of a given investment



priority (urban areas, areas NATURA 2000), or the system of scoring investments implemented in areas with the existing local development plan (regarding utility infrastructure). Cohesion Policy final results can be assessed only after the completion of the ROP. It is also worth noting that in the peripheral areas, the level of technical infrastructure and ensuring transport accessibility are often of strategic importance, being a necessary factor to stimulate bottom-up development processes (and in this case the territorial management at the national level is of great importance).

Interactions between spatial planning and territorial governance with the protection of **natural and cultural heritage** are very complex. Regional government documents are characterized by a relative coherence. They are also consistent with documents at national level. However, there is much less consistency to be observed by regional and communal strategies. In this case, such interactions cannot be clearly assessed. Programmes, supported by EU funds, too frequently have a spatially dispersed and point-type character, there is a necessity to change the approach by directing the actions toward systemic programmes, as well as to elaborate the mechanisms of supporting such actions. This concerns especially the entire ecosystems, ecological corridors and cultural landscapes protection. Common plans of spatial development for groups of communes within given functional areas can be viewed as an instrument supporting the accomplishment of better coordination and cohesion in combining the natural and cultural heritage protection with spatial planning, due to concentration of natural or natural and cultural values

In summary, it should be emphasized that in the period 2004-2015, **cohesion policy played a significant role in Poland** in the area of infrastructure development, support for the local economy and support for peripheral areas as well as in the natural and cultural heritage protection. **The existing planning system did not fully support the achievement of these goals.** This applies in particular to spatial planning system, which was reformed directly before the accession to the EU by, among others, cancelling all local development plans established before 1994. As a result, it was necessary to pass special purpose acts. In addition, in some cases access to EU funds indirectly favoured undesirable transformations of space (dispersion of development). Spatial benefits related to cohesion policy were greater on the national scale and in the peripheral areas. At the regional level, especially local (including metropolitan), redistribution of funds was not sufficiently anchored in the planning system.

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## 14. Appendix

List of persons interviewed:

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A	12.09.2017	Prof. Wojciech Dziemianowicz	University of Warsaw, Faculty of Geography, Department of Local Development and Policy
B	15.09.2017	Dr Piotr Łysoń	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (director of Department of Rural Development 2001-2010); Central Statistical Office (director of Social Surveys and Living Conditions Department)
C	18.09.2017	prof. Zbigniew Myczkowski	Cracow University of Technology, Department of Countryside and Engineering Structures
D	27.09.2017	Prof. Krystyna Solarek	Warsaw University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture
E	1.10.2017	Dr Andrzej Brzeziński	Warsaw University of Technology, Faculty of Civil Engineering
F	6.10.2017	Prof. Jerzy Solon	Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization PAS

List of persons on focus groups:

### Case study: Łódzkie

Lp.	Date	Affiliation /Name	Institution
1	5.09.2017	Andrzej Górczyński	Regional Assembly of the Łódź Region
2	5.09.2017	Andrzej Jankowski	Mayor of Stryków
3	5.09.2017	Anna Szymańska	Regional Territorial Observatory of Łódź Province
4	5.09.2017	Karolina Dmochowska-Dudek	Faculty of Geographical Sciences of the University of Łódź
5	5.09.2017	Krzysztof Tomczak	National Institute of Territorial Self-Government
6	5.09.2017	Michał Bulder	Spatial Planning Office of the Łódź Region
7	5.09.2017	Marcin Wójcik	Institute of Socio-Economic Geography and Space Organization of the University of Łódź
8	5.09.2017	Tomasz Bystroński	National Institute of Territorial Self-Government
9	5.09.2017	Tomasz Jakubiec	City Strategy Office of the City of Łódź
10	5.09.2017	Tadeusz Markowski	Faculty of Management, University of Łódź
11	5.09.2017	Wioleta Głowacka	Municipality of Stryków
12	5.09.2017	Wojciech Michalski	Department of Strategy and Analysis of the City of Łódź

### Case study: Mazowieckie

Lp.	Date	Affiliation /Name	Institution
1	8.09.2017	Anita Lipińska	Office of Architecture and Spatial Planning, Warsaw City Hall
2	8.09.2017	Andrzej Zalewski	Faculty of Architecture, Warsaw University of Technology
3	8.09.2017	Dorota Mantey	Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies of Warsaw University
4	8.09.2017	Elżbieta Kozubek	Strategic Programming Team, Mazowieckie

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			Regional Planning Office in Warsaw
5	8.09.2017	Grażyna Gajewska	Office of Architecture and Spatial Planning, Warsaw City Hall
6	8.09.2017	Jakub Majewski	ProKolej Foundation
7	8.09.2017	Jan Maciej Chmielewski	Faculty of Geodesy and Cartography, Warsaw University of Technology
8	8.09.2017	Jacek Steinke	Office of Architecture and Spatial Planning, Warsaw City Hall
9	8.09.2017	Katarzyna Harmata	Department of Certification and Regional Development of Mazovian Voivodeship Office in Warsaw
10	8.09.2017	Łukasz Oleszczuk	NGO "Association for the Integration of Capital Communication"
11	8.09.2017	Łukasz Zaborowski	Regional Planning Office
12	8.09.2017	Marek Kozak	Centre for European Regional and Local Studies at the University of Warsaw
13	8.09.2017	Marcin Wajda	Department of Regional Development and European Funds of the Self-Government of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship
14	8.09.2017	Piotr Rosik	IGSO
15	8.09.2017	Paulina Sikorska	Marshal Office
16	8.09.2017	Tomasz Zegar	Central Statistical Office

### Case study: Podlaskie

Lp.	Date	Affiliation /Name	Institution
1	2.10.2017	Leszek Lulewicz	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
2	2.10.2017	Mirosław Stepaniuk	NGO "Podlaskie Heritage"
3	2.10.2017	Alicja Mieszkowska	Podlaskie Spatial Planning Office
4	2.10.2017	Ryszard Serwatka	Podlaskie Spatial Planning Office
5	2.10.2017	Lech Magrel	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
6	2.10.2017	Bartosz Czarnecki	Bialystok Technical University
7	2.10.2017	Małgorzata Muczek	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
8	2.10.2017	Marta Pacewicz	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
9	2.10.2017	Anna Pietkiewska	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
10	2.10.2017	Katarzyna Kłoczko-Arent	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
11	2.10.2017	Paweł Babul	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
12	2.10.2017	Anna Abako	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
13	2.10.2017	Wioletta Dabrowska	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
14	2.10.2017	Izabela Łokić	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
15	2.10.2017	Halina Doborz	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
16	2.10.2017	representative	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
17	2.10.2017	Jarosław Borejszo	Wigry National Park
18	2.10.2017	Monika Konkol	Marshal's Office of Podlaskie Voivodeship
19	2.10.2017	Mikołaj Pawilicz	Head of Commune Narewka



# COMPASS – Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe

## **Case Study Report: Sweden**

Prepared by  
Lukas Smas and Johannes Lidmo (Nordregio)





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## Abbreviations

CP	Cohesion Policy
EC	European Commission
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
EGTC	European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
EU	European Union
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
TA2020	Territorial Agenda 2020
TG	Territorial Governance

## 1. Introduction

Spatial planning in Sweden is to a large degree equated with municipal planning. Planning at this level can be characterised as relatively 'comprehensive' due to the numerous tasks related to the development and provision of public services that are under the aegis of municipalities. In addition, most of the 290 Swedish municipalities cover comparatively large areas, which are of the size of regions in other countries (such as Germany, Italy or the Netherlands), as indicated in Figure 1. This further articulates that municipal planning also deals with issues of a more regional scope, such as urban-rural interactions and infrastructure provision. Last but not least, the so-called municipal planning monopoly is further expressed by a strong local municipal autonomy.

Regional development has not been done through regional planning, but rather through regional redistribution until the 1990s when regional policy shifted focus towards promoting endogenous growth. In the Swedish government system, there are two main regional bodies; the County Administrative Board, which represents the national state at the region level and acts as a regional coordinating body for the state, and the County Council (or Region) which is an elected regional body responsible for healthcare and public transport. However, the regional structure is under reform but is today a complex web of geographically unevenly distributed responsibilities for regional development. In 14 counties, the responsibility for regional development is assigned to the directly elected County Council (including Östergötland). In six counties, inter-municipal (including the county council) cooperation agency is tasked with regional development questions. In Stockholm, the County Administrative Board is responsible for the regional development issues.

In this report, we focus on two regions to investigate and analyse the relationship between cohesion policy and spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice. The two regions are the metropolitan capital region of Stockholm and the (semi) peripheral region of Östergötland. The analysis is based on desk research (e.g. review of policy documents connecting cohesion and other sector policies with spatial planning; documentary and questionnaire collection of standardised and statistical data; in-depth description of policy or project or programme ) combined with a total of 8 semi-structured interviews with 'key-players', for example, policy-makers, representatives of national, regional and local authorities, non-governmental actors and practitioners (see appendix).

Figure 1. NUTS 3 regions in Sweden: Case study areas Stockholm and Östergötland

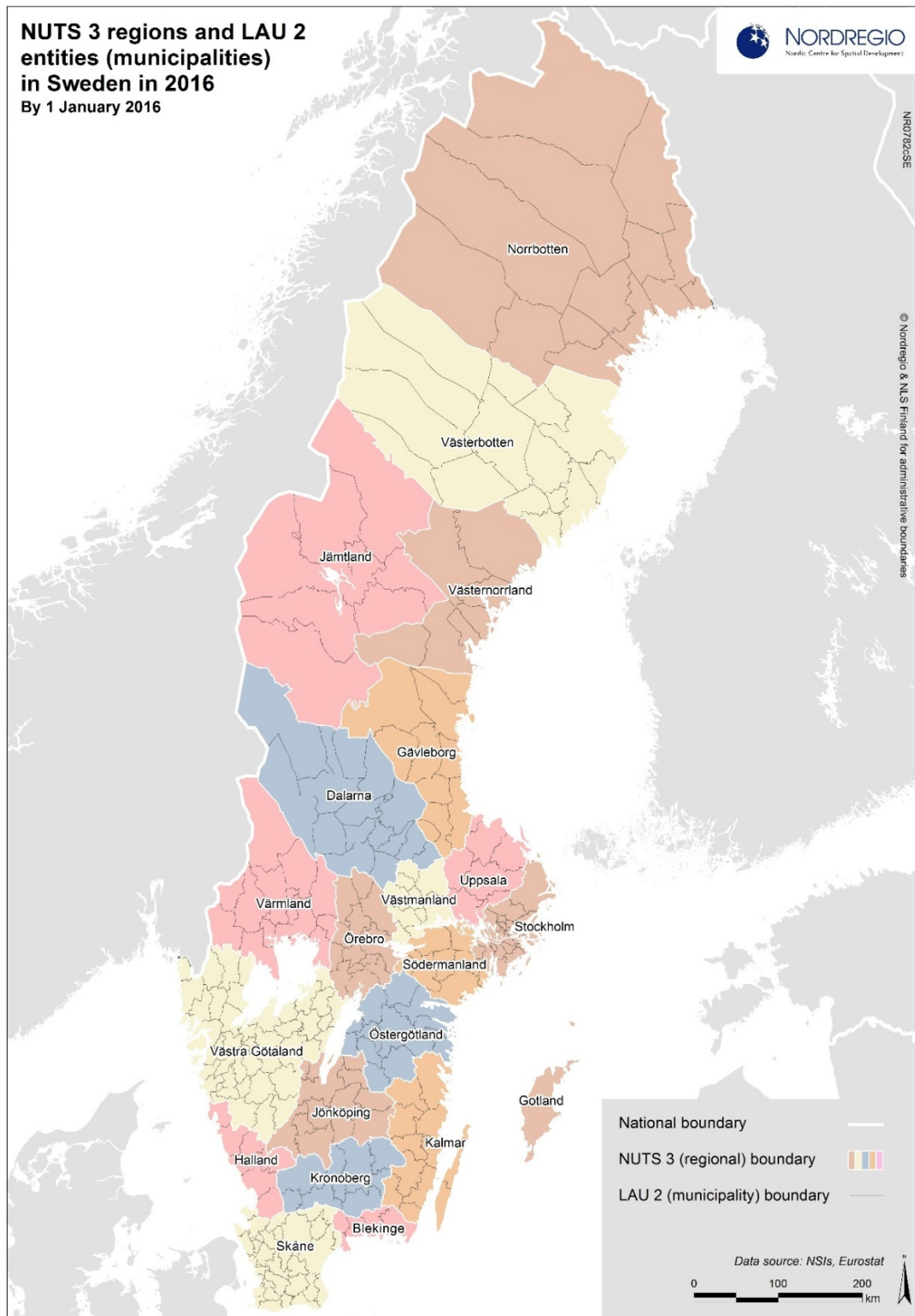


Table 1. Examples and good practice study in the regions for Sweden

<b>Region</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Polycentricity and suburbanization</b>	<b>Peripheries and other specific regions</b>	<b>Support for local economy</b>	<b>Transport infrastructure and accessibility</b>	<b>Natural and cultural heritage</b>	<b>Convergence objectives</b>
<b>Stockholm</b>	SE110	Ex		Ex	Ex		R, E
<b>Östergötland</b>	SE123		EX/P	Ex		Ex/P	R, E

*Ex - possible example to study, P – possible good practices to study, C - Convergence, R - Regional competitiveness and employment, E - European territorial cooperation*

## 2. General characteristics of the regions

### 2.1. Stockholm

In this report, the Stockholm region refers to Stockholm county which consists of 26 municipalities. Stockholm municipality is the dominating municipality by having 45 percent of the population in the region. Between 2000-2015 the population in the Stockholm region increased from about 1 800 000 to 2 000 000. In an EU context, the Stockholm region is quite prosperous in terms of economic activity, including a high employment rate and regional innovation scoreboard (see Figure 2-4). It has moreover a diverse economy (RUFS 2010; Hermelin & Smas 2010). The ICT-sector is increasing and the ICT-cluster in Kista attracts many international and national enterprises. During the last decades, the northern parts of the region from central Stockholm, via Kista to Arlanda airport have experienced a substantial economic growth compared to the rest of the region. As a result, a strong economic and transport corridor has developed. The southern parts of the region have traditionally consisted of a larger share of manufacturing which have been more vulnerable to the de-industrialisation and out-sourcing trend (Hermelin & Smas, 2010, p. 7-11). As such, the development of the strong economic and transport corridor north of central Stockholm has further strengthened the northern-southern division of the Stockholm region.

Most spatial planning challenges and spatial objectives are pointed out in municipal planning documents but also in the current regional plan. Economic growth has often been the most important objective in the region, in which planning challenges have revolved around facilitating for such a development. The regional plan (RUFS2010) outlines several major challenges in the region. That is to ensure a population growth simultaneously as improving environmental conditions and health amongst the population. Another one is to become an internationally leading metropolitan city-region as well as to increase safety. The region should also reduce its environmental footprint at the same time as expanding the accessibility into the region. Enabling for better education, intra- and interregional transportation system and housing supply are also considered as major challenges. All types of people regardless of their background should be able to live in the region. So, the idea of a polycentric Stockholm region has thus developed into a strategy to tackle those challenges, which puts pressure on an improved transport infrastructure system. In the following chapters (4-6), the thematic issues of 1) promoting polycentric and balanced territorial development; 2) improving territorial connectivity; and 3) ensuring global competitiveness, will illustrate how these issues are managed in practice in the Stockholm region.

The most important planning documents in the region are the regional plan (RUFS2010), and municipal comprehensive planning documents. But also, other (strategic) policy documents are of important character such as *Vision Stockholm 2030*, *Traffic Maintenance program for public transportation* etc. Not to forget, the Operational Programme 'Stockholm' (2007-2013)

did some important priorities: 1) Development of innovative environments in the urban area, 2) Business development and 3) Accessibility. There was no specific programme for the Stockholm region in the previous period. But these priorities point to the specific focus of the economic structure in the region and some objectives for future development during large parts of the time-period for this research project.

## **2.2. Region Östergötland**

Östergötland is a (semi) peripheral region, particularly in a European context, in eastern Sweden south of Stockholm. The region is the fourth largest in Sweden in terms of population density (RUP Östergötland 2030, p. 8). Östergötland is a county which consists of 13 municipalities. The population of Östergötland increased between 2000-2015 from 411 000 to 445 000. In terms of economic activity Östergötland is slightly above the EU28 average in terms of GDP per capita in PPS (see Figure 2). Östergötland has a diverse geographical structure with two main cities, Norrköping and Linköping, considered as the main cores of the region in the regional development program (RUP Östergötland 2030). Other municipalities and their urban areas are rather small in population size compared to Norrköping and Linköping. Agricultural and forest dominate the geographical structure in the region, as well as the unique coastline in the east including an archipelago. This means that this region and its municipalities often deal with issues of a more regional scope, such as urban-rural interactions.

These diverse geographical preconditions shape the diverse economic structure and spatial planning challenges in Östergötland. Linköping and Norrköping, as the main cores, struggle with completely different challenges compared to smaller and de-populated areas of the region. The countryside often consists of one-man enterprises while both Linköping and Norrköping offer tertiary education through Linköping university and another type of business environment compared to the rest of the region.

Most spatial planning challenges and spatial objectives are pointed out in municipal planning documents, where most municipalities clearly struggle with issues and challenges in both urban and rural areas. In Östergötland, six major (spatial planning) challenges are identified in the regional development program. These challenges are related to attract all types of people and enterprises to Östergötland, and to ensure good education for youths simultaneously as the elderly care is ensured despite issues with the population structure. The challenges are also related to promote economic development and reduce the environmental footprint, where the economic cores (Norrköping and Linköping) may be strengthened at the same time as the outer region could develop based on their local assets and become better integrated to the main cores. The strengthening of Östergötland's position in a wider regional, national and EU context is a further challenge as well as to improve and develop the public transportation system for the needs of today and tomorrow.

The most important documents in the region are the regional development program (RUP Östergötland 2030), and some planning documents such as the non-statutory regional spatial strategy (Regional Strukturbild för Östergötland 2016) and the municipal comprehensive planning documents. But also other (strategic) policy documents are of important character such as a common development program for the coastline and the archipelago (Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030). Not to forget, in the programming period 2000-2006, Östergötland was included in the Öarna region Objective 2 Programme which had the action priorities 1) living environment, 2) development of human resources, and 3) economy and infrastructure. These priorities point to the specific focus of the economic structure in the region and some objectives for spatial development during large parts of the time-period for this research project.

*Figure 2. GRP (PPP) per capita in Europe 2013*



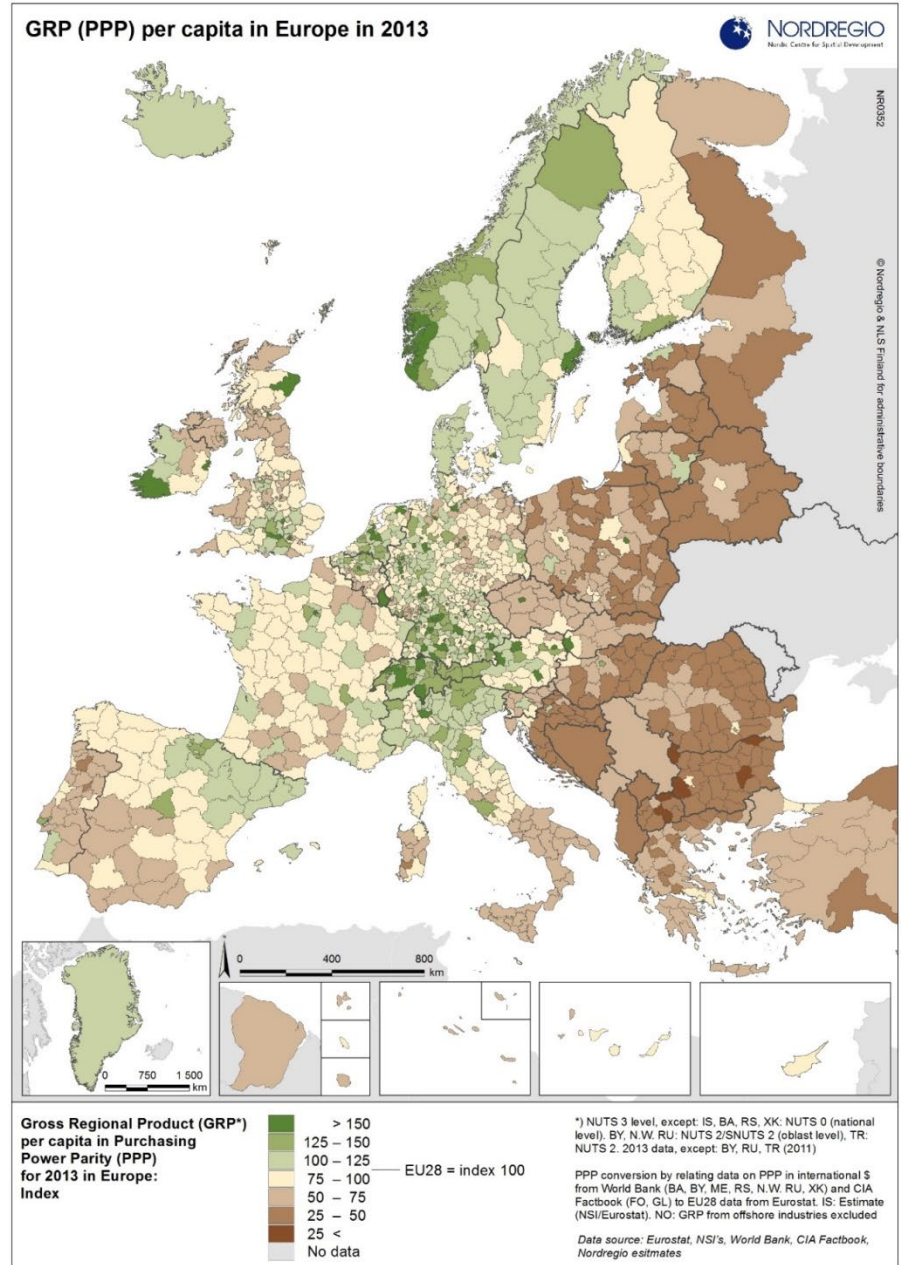
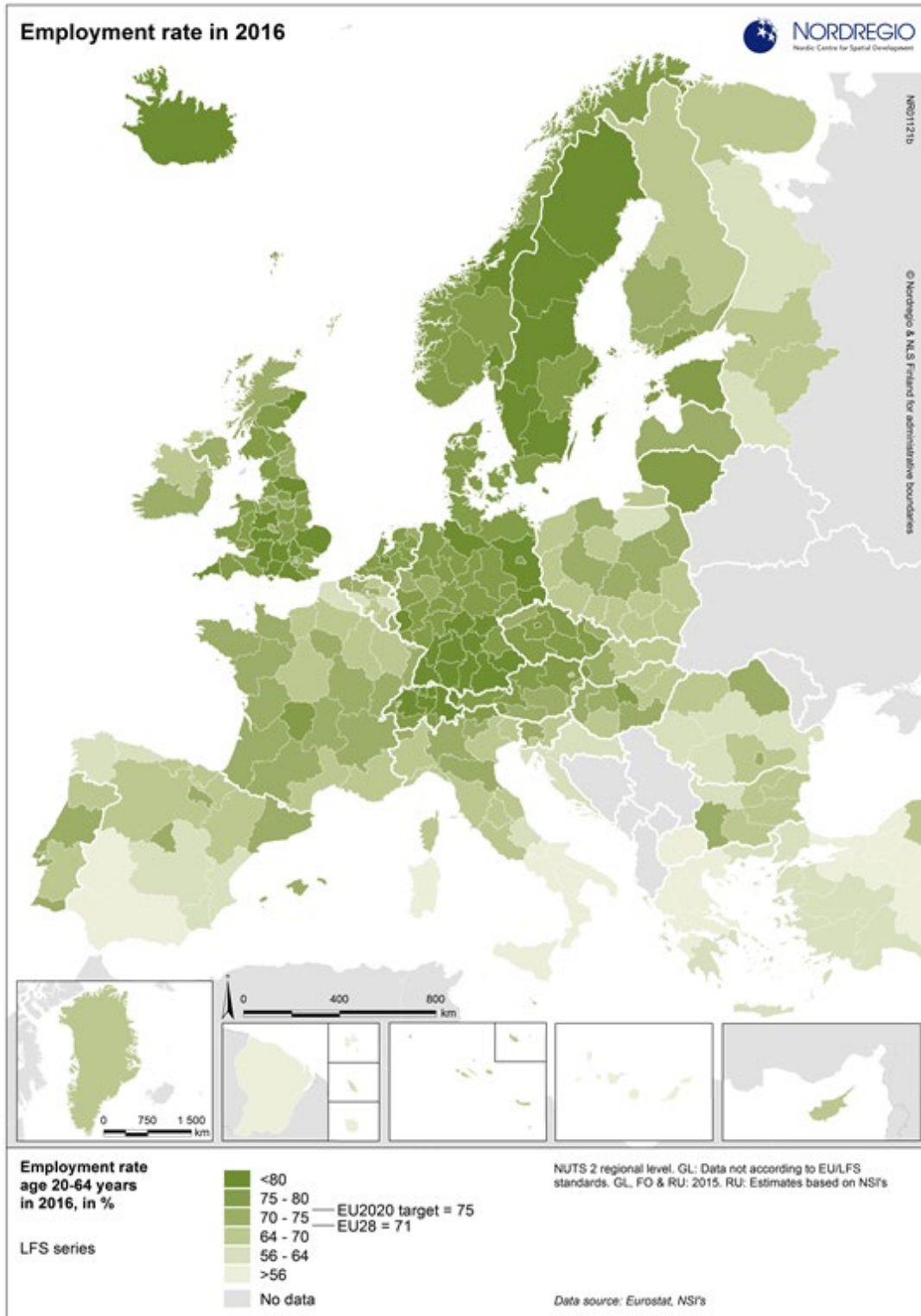


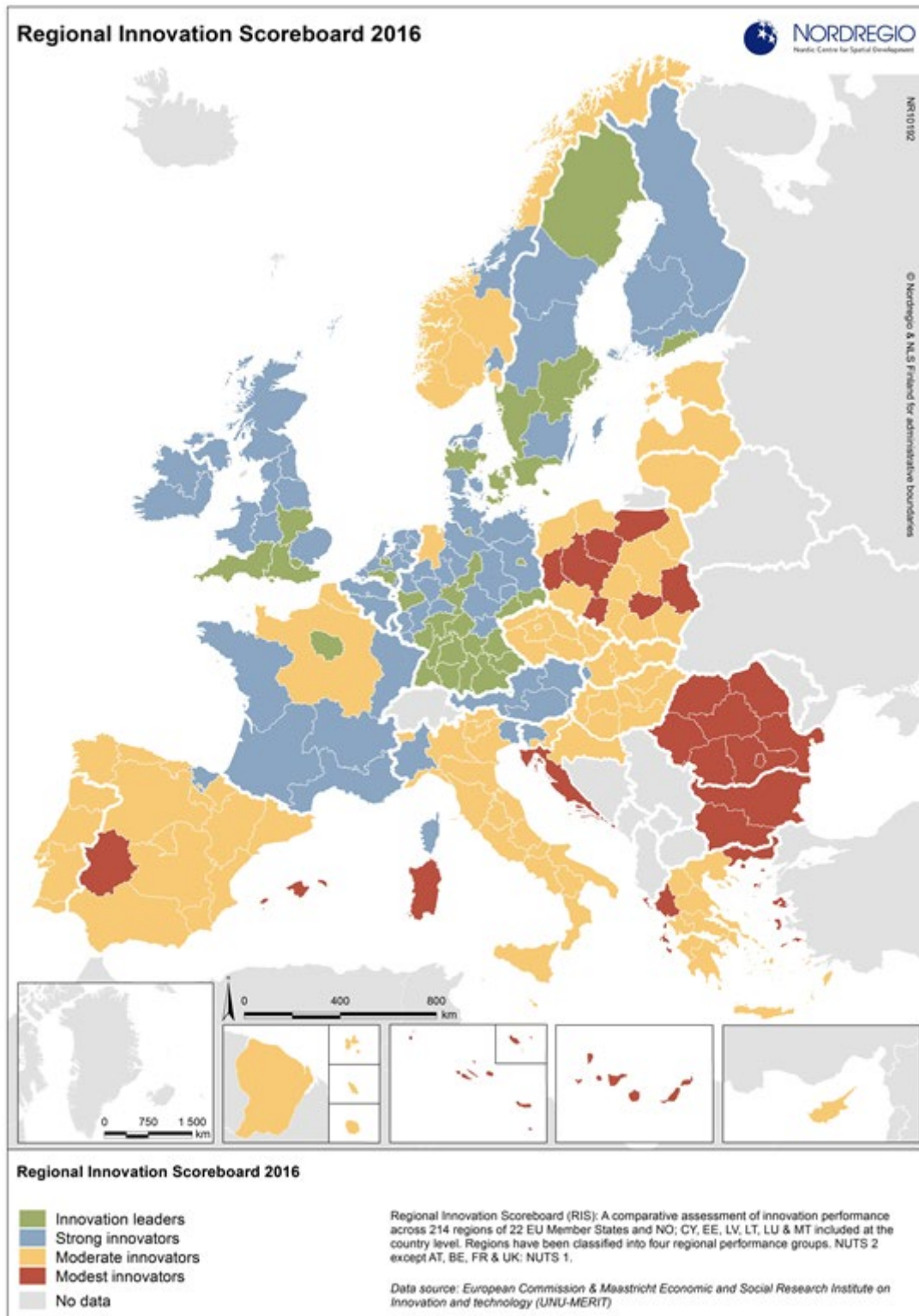
Figure 3. Employment rate in Europe 2016



Note: The employment rate is an important indicator of the economy of a country or a region and is sensitive to changes in economic cycles. The employment rate is also an important social indicator as labour market exclusion can be both a result of and a precursor to social exclusion. In the EU2020 strategy, employment rate was therefore chosen as an indicator for the theme “inclusive growth”. The EU2020 goal is to increase the average employment rate in the EU from 68.5% in 2010 to at least

75% in 2020. By 2016, the average employment rate for the EU was 71% indicating some remaining room for improvement.

Figure 4. Regional Innovation Scoreboard 2016



Note: Regional Innovation Scoreboard (RIS) 2016 is an index, a region's performance is measured using a combination of three innovation indicators: enablers (tertiary education and R&D ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

expenditures as a percentage of GDP); firm activities (EPO patent applications, SMEs innovation/patents and R&D expenditure in the business sector as a percentage of GDP); and outputs (knowledge-intensive activities). Regions are classified into four groups showing different levels of regional innovation performance: innovation leaders (green on the map), strong innovators (blue), moderate innovators (yellow) and modest innovators (red).

### 3. General overview of thematic issues in Sweden

As in many other European countries, planning at the national level is mainly of a guiding character, even if national authorities can designate areas of national interest. It becomes explicit and tangible in politics and society - as Schmitt (2015) further notes - when (for example) new transport linkages of national interest are being planned or when, at least among experts, changes are being undertaken within the two main legal frameworks for planning: The Planning and Building Act (SFS 2010:900) and the Environmental Code (SFS 1998:808).

However, regional development is guided by a different legal framework, the Regional Growth Ordinance (SFS 2007:713). The bodies responsible for regional development are commissioned with leading and developing regional sustainable growth policies in accordance with the Regional Growth Ordinance (SFS 2007:713). Another focus is on the implementation and management of EU Cohesion Policy. The responsible regional bodies are tasked with drafting the regional development strategies and coordinating their implementation.

The regional development programmes should also serve to guide local strategies in municipalities, related regional strategies and development processes. This aspect was reinforced by an amendment to the Planning and Building Act in 2011, which stressed that the municipal comprehensive plan should take into account national and regional objectives (Boverket, 2011). In 2015, a parliamentary committee even proposed that regional planning should become obligatory in all Swedish counties (SOU 2015:59). According to this proposal, which is still under negotiation, non-legally binding regional planning programmes should inform a guiding document for the municipalities, the comprehensive plans and the detailed plans.

There are no comprehensive national planning directives in Sweden, but there are over 100 different sectorial national goals relevant for spatial planning which should be considered in municipal (and regional) planning (Boverket, 2011). Although the *National Board of Housing, Building and Planning* has on behalf of the government produced a Vision for Sweden 2025 (Boverket, 2012), it is more of an inspirational piece than a strategic national planning document.

Transport planning can be seen as a separate system that runs parallel to municipal and regional planning. For instance, the *Swedish Transport Administration* elaborates a national transport plan, and assigned regional authorities elaborate the regional counterparts which reflect the sectorial organisation of Swedish governance in general, and the autonomous municipalities and the decentralised planning system in particular. Another example is that natural environment and cultural heritage are two separate issues governed by two different national authorities (Swedish Environmental Protection Agency respectively Swedish National Heritage Board) under two different ministries (Ministry of the Environment and Energy respectively Ministry of Culture).

Table 2. Assessment of the importance of each issue and impact of the cohesion policy.

Thematic issues	National		Regional		Local	
	Level of	Impact	Level of	Impact	Level of	Impact of

	<b>importance</b>	<b>of the cohesion policy</b>	<b>importance</b>	<b>of the cohesion policy</b>	<b>importance</b>	<b>of the cohesion policy</b>
Polycentricity and suburbanization	3	1	2-3 (regional variations)	2	3	1
Peripheries and other specific regions	3	2	3	2	3	1
Support for local economy	3	2	2-3 (spatial variations)	2-3 (varies)	2	1
Transport infrastructure and accessibility	3	2	3	1	3	1
Natural and cultural heritage	2-3 (thematic variation)	1-2 (thematic variation)	2-3 (thematic variations)	1	3	1

**3 = strong importance/impact** (e.g.: explicit reference to the aim/objective in main domestic territorial governance and spatial planning documents, clear implication for policy development and perceivable practical impacts)

**2 = moderate importance/impact** (e.g.: explicit/implicit reference to the aim/objective into some domestic territorial governance and spatial planning documents, partial implications in policy and practice)

**1 = little importance/impact** (e.g.: discussion in domestic discourses, that does not produce any actual impact in the practice)

**0 = no importance/impact** (e.g.: no mention in the domestic discourse)

**na = not applicable**

### **Polycentricity and suburbanization**

Polycentricity and suburbanization is an important issue in Sweden primarily in the larger urban areas. It is implicitly referred to in The Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, *Vision for Sweden 2025* which aims to formulate a vision for the spatial development in Sweden and conceptualise how different national goals relates to spatial planning. In regional plans and spatial strategic policy documents such as the regional plan for Stockholm and regional spatial strategies of region Skåne and Östergötland, are polycentricity explicitly mentioned and outlined as an important spatial strategy to combat sprawl and uncontrolled suburbanization. This is also reflected in many municipal comprehensive plans that emphasis nodes in the polycentric regional networks. Important municipal strategies are otherwise compact city development and densification (Persson, 2013; Hofstad, 2012).

### **Peripheries and other specific regions**

Sweden is a sparsely populated country with extensive peripheral areas and other forms of specific regions such mountainous areas, archipelago and island areas. In the previous national strategy for innovation (En nationell strategi för regional konkurrenskraft, entreprenörskap och sysselsättning 2007– 2013) the condition in both the sparsely populated areas in Northern Sweden and the larger ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

urban areas are highlighted as important issues. In the latest national strategy for sustainable regional growth and attractiveness (En nationell strategi för hållbar regional tillväxt och attraktionskraft 2015–2020) sparsely populated areas is an issue primarily for regional policy, and only indirectly related to spatial planning through creating attractive and accessible areas. Spatial planning is more explicitly related to housing policy.

### **Support for local economy**

The *Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth* is managing and distributing the European Regional Development Funds which alongside the Social Fund is the main instrument to implement EU Cohesion policy (Sweden is not eligible for Cohesion Funds). However, the agency is mostly focused on regional policy in accordance with Regional Growth Ordinance which stipulate the regional authorities needs to produce regional development programs. But collaborative project has initiated projects to coordinate with spatial planning and regional development programmes have been initiated. Support for local business is diligently regulated by national ordinances which incorporates EU legislation.

### **Transport infrastructure and accessibility**

The Swedish Transport Administration regularly produce a national infrastructure plan in which particularly the TEN-T networks are highlighted as important. (Major infrastructure projects have been co-financed by EU funding related to the TEN-T). Based in the national plans the regional authorities responsible for regional development produce regional transport plans which in turn are related to regional spatial plans and strategies. The accessibility, in terms of regional enlargement and digitalisation, is also an important issue in the national growth strategy.

### **Natural and cultural heritage**

Planning and management of natural environments and cultural heritage are integral part of the planning systems and issues regulated in both The Planning and Building Act and Environmental Code. Designating areas of national interest is an important planning instrument for national authorities to regulate and protect the natural environments and cultural heritage. The County Administrative Board, which is the national authority at regional level, has the responsibility to oversee that national interest are followed in municipal planning. The municipalities are also obliged to address these national interest in the comprehensive municipal plans.



## **4. Polycentricity and suburbanization in Stockholm region**

### **4.1. Thematic issues problems**

In the Stockholm region, there is a relatively long tradition at least since the end of the 1990s of planning for a balanced and polycentric territorial development (c.f. RUF2001; RUF2010). The existing regional plan is mainly indicative and advisory (c.f. Schmitt 2013). In Sweden, the municipalities are the strongest and key players for truly promoting or at least implementing the desired development. The Stockholm County Council is responsible for developing the regional plan (which is mandatory but not binding). However, in Stockholm the County Administrative Board is responsible for regional development and for developing a regional development programme. The current RUF2010 is both a regional plan in accordance with the Planning and Building Act and a regional development programme in accordance with the Regional Growth Ordinance.

Polycentricity is a core spatial strategy in the two most recent ones (RUF2001, adopted in 2003, and RUF2010, adopted in 2010) which explicitly and strategically define a number of regional cores in various locations in the region. The idea of promoting an intraregional balanced territorial development in the Stockholm region can at least be tracked back to the 1990s even before Sweden joined the EU in 1995 (see more below). Stockholm's regional plan also incorporates a larger functional regional perspective and includes discussion of polycentric development beyond the territorial border of the county.

The impact of the regional plans is debatable, but today there are two main trends in the region – i) suburbanisation which exist concurrently as ii) densification of the urban areas proximate to transportation nodes. Even though regional plans have promoted a balanced and polycentric territorial development in the Stockholm region for an extensive time period of at least two decades, the region is still monocentric where economic activities but also social/recreational/cultural amenities are concentrated to the central core (e.g. RUF 2010, p. 101f). Nevertheless, the idea of developing regional cores and promoting a polycentric region has had an effect on the spatial planning in the municipalities, i.e. been included in and accounted for in municipal comprehensive plans.

In sum, the idea of developing a balanced and polycentric region has been present in the Stockholm region for at least 20 years, but the challenges of promoting and implementing this development is still very present.

### **4.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

Stockholm County Council has one main statutory spatial planning instrument (developing a regional plan) at its disposal, but it is of strategic and framework character and its implementation is dependent on other actors and authorities. The practice of regional planning might here be perceived as territorial governance, i.e. assisting in active cooperation across government, market and civil society actors to coordinate decision-making and actions that have an impact on the quality of places and their development as a coordinating activity. In the regional planning of Stockholm much focus has been

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on communication with the municipalities but also other important and relevant national/regional agencies, but also with real estate companies and developers. Many of these actors (private and public) have mandate and power to finance (fully or partly) or to implement the plans for a balanced and polycentric territorial development. For example, the municipalities prepare comprehensive plans and detailed development plans, where private actors are crucial for the investments and the definite development to implement the plans.

Since 2010 the regional plan has begun to have an effect locally in the municipalities, discernible in key municipal planning documents such as the comprehensive plan who refers to the regional plan (e.g. RUF2010) and its objective of a polycentric development. But without involvement and investments from private actors, such as the developers, it is impossible for the planning to be implemented. A key issue is thus also to include, engage and make private actors aware and positive to the polycentric spatial strategy and communicate the regional cores as attractive sites for private investments. This illustrates that the idea of a balanced and territorial development in the region is not merely dependent upon the coordination of public actors (e.g. the municipalities) but also on the investments from private actors.

It is evident that there are tensions in the region in terms of how the region should develop but also in regard to the perception of how the region is developing. Because of the municipal planning monopoly (the power and right to regulate the use of land and water areas), the municipalities do not in practice need to relate and adapt their planning to the regional plan. Instead, it has become a task for the regional planners to deal with these issues and try to coordinate, adapt to and account for the will/desire/need of the municipalities in their regional planning. Nevertheless, the regional planning in Stockholm cannot be too visionary (only strategic and as a framework) because the risk of unrealistic promises which cannot be achieved.

Another issue is the horizontal coordination between the County Council and the County Administrative Board. Even if the current regional plan also includes the regional development program and thus is a good practice example of policy coordination, the idea of a polycentric development poses challenges. The County Administrative Board is also responsible for developing the transport infrastructure plans for the county through which the national funding for infrastructure is allocated in that plan (see more in Chapter 3 and 5). Intra- and interregional connectivity and good public transportation is a necessity, often a prerequisite, in order to achieve the objective of a balanced and polycentric territorial development (c.f. RUF2001; RUF2010).

However, the regional plan developed by the County Council must be customized to the Stockholm county transport infrastructure plan which is prepared by the County Administrative Board of Stockholm. In other words, the regional planning in Stockholm can face difficulties to achieve the objective of a polycentric and balanced territorial development already at the planning stage because regional planning cannot precede the Stockholm county transport infrastructure plan, rather it is the opposite. In practice, the two plans have different logics and rationales, transport infrastructure is

being developed based on needs whereas the regional plan aims to rather steer the development towards a polycentric region.

Furthermore, other coordination issues seem to exist within Stockholm County Council. Similar tensions as with the relation to the County Administrative Board, that is to integrate transportation planning/transportation infrastructure objects within regional (spatial) planning, tend to exist between the traffic office and the regional planning office at Stockholm County Council. For example, the regional traffic office decided to reduce the frequency of the commuter trains to an area that was strategically identified as a regional core by the regional planning office.

Generally, the thematic issues of transport infrastructure and accessibility and polycentricity and suburbanisation are clearly interrelated in the Stockholm region (but also in other larger urban regions in Sweden such as Skåne, Gothenburg and Östergötland). One important key to promote a balanced and polycentric territorial development seems, at least in the Stockholm region, to be to better integrate transportation planning with spatial planning at all geographical and administrative scale levels. However, integration between different policy domains is a difficult task, not only related to coordination between different planning institutions and places in the region, but also within the various planning institutions.

Without good intra- and interregional connectivity, which is partially funded of state financial resources, the promotion of a polycentric region is a challenge and might be inadequate. This is also dependent on the vertical coordination, that municipalities adapt their local planning documents and planning practices to the regional planning. Importantly, private actors must also perceive a gain to invest in line with the desired regional development (e.g. invest in the regional cores) planned by the regional planning office in collaboration with various actors at all geographical scale levels.

EU2020 and EU Cohesion policy is rather absent in planning documents in the Stockholm region even in relation to polycentricity and suburbanisation issues. The former regional plan (RUF2001) was used as a basis for the regional economic growth program in Stockholm county in 2004-2007, but also for the previous regional structural funds program (RUF2010, p. 225). In addition to this, Cohesion Policy or other EU policies seem to have had no explicit impact on the planning in the region but it is evident that the EU discourse and terminology is used since the region promotes a balanced and polycentric territorial development, both in the county and on a larger regional scale (including nearby small-sized cities and other counties, see RUF2010). But also, the fact that this idea has begun to have an effect locally (in the municipalities). Thus, the EU discourse seem to be indirectly infused locally and on the regional level, even though there are contradictions and barriers on how this development is being enacted in practice. It should however be noted that the discussions of promoting a balanced territorial development began even before Sweden was a EU member state, but that these received an indirect support through for example policy documents such as the ESDP.

In other words, the EU discourse of promoting a balanced and polycentric territorial development in the Stockholm region is widespread as a spatial vision. Even if the discourse tends to be present

there are none or only a few explicit references to the EU, EU2020, Cohesion Policy or other EU policies in the main planning documents. In sum, it tends to be no explicit directly traceable impact of Cohesion Policy on spatial planning within this thematic issue in the Stockholm region. However, the adaptation of the EU discourse points to an implicit relationship between Cohesion Policy and spatial planning.

### **4.3. Recommendation**

Spatial planning systems and territorial governance have direct and clear implications for promoting polycentric and balanced territorial development. A key concern and open questions is however if it is local, regional and/or national polycentrism that is the aim and whether there are any potential conflicts and/or benefits of striving towards polycentrism at these different geographical scales. This is also directly related to how the spatial planning system might be improved to address the issue, i.e. the spatial planning mandate should be aligned with the intended spatial scope and scale of the polycentric development. However, also other policy areas can be useful to influence polycentric development and management of urban change such as transport infrastructure planning. Coordination and cooperation between institutions across different policy fields is thus recommended even for issues that are directly within the domain of the spatial planning system. It is also recommended that each organisation and institution internally coordinate their activities but also recognise that different policy domains and planning instruments have different rationalities (e.g. plans that aim to steer spatial development and plans that facilities spatial needs).

## **5. Transport infrastructure and accessibility in Stockholm region**

### **5.1. Thematic issues problems**

The thematic issue to improve territorial connectivity for individuals, communities and enterprises is clearly interrelated with promoting a polycentric and balanced territorial development in the Stockholm region. Good intraregional and interregional connectivity is a prerequisite for promoting a polycentric development in the Stockholm region. The regional cores in the Stockholm region are supposed to develop into centres with a diverse and specialized set of services compared to district or municipal centres in the region (RUFSS 2010, p. 102). To make those services available to citizens and businesses, good territorial connectivity is undoubtedly an important issue in the region, particularly in terms of public transportation (see RUFSS 2001; RUFSS 2010; Handlingsprogram: Regional Stads kärnor 2013). International accessibility is also viewed as crucial for regional or national growth, and especially airports are central to increase the international connectivity to the region and to Sweden as such (e.g. RUFSS 2010, p. 56).

Infrastructure has been crucial for the spatial structure of Stockholm region which to a large degree developed along its main radial transport corridors (main roads and railway network) where the protection of the green belts (i.e. preserving the green structure) has been strongly influential. This has created a monocentric region where most transport infrastructure is directed through the central core of Stockholm city centre. The circular connectivity across the green wedges is thus a challenge, especially if the objective is to develop a polycentric network and balanced territorial development. In a Swedish and Stockholm perspective, this process includes actors on all governmental levels which have a diverse set of competences regarding this issue.

### **5.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

Transport infrastructure planning and spatial planning are somewhat clearly distinct policy domains in a Swedish context but also intricately connected which is clearly evident in the Stockholm region. The responsibility for transport infrastructure is distributed amongst different actors from the local to the national level, depending on several factors: for example, ownership of the roads, type of infrastructure etc. For example, the municipalities are responsible for developing new municipal roads, and there are various tools in the Swedish legislation on how to finance the implementation of new municipal roads which may concern actors such as developers, landowners or private persons who will benefit from getting better accessibility etc.

The *Swedish Transport Administration* is responsible for the national transport infrastructure (e.g. state-owned roads or railway-network) and for developing a national plan for transport

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infrastructure in Sweden. The Administration was established in 2010 when the administration for roads and railway was merged into one national administration. The regional authorities responsible for developing the regional development programme are also responsible for developing a transport infrastructure plan for the county where they operate (most often the County Council but in the case of Stockholm the County Administrative Board). The County Councils are also responsible for public transportation, which thus it is not necessarily the same regional actor who develop the county transport infrastructure plan. Interestingly, the delegation of all these responsibilities and related ones (e.g. spatial objectives) varies between the regions in Sweden.

In addition to this are new forms of governance arrangements which exist in parallel to this. To be mentioned is in particular the National Negotiation on Housing and Infrastructure (Sverigeförhandlingen), which shall enable the rapid implementation on a future railway network, more housing, and better labour market. It shall propose funding principles and a development strategy, and to identify route and station options in and around towns and cities. The main task of the National Negotiation on Housing and Infrastructure, which was appointed by the Swedish Government, is to lead negotiations on co-financing, in which municipalities, regions, towns and the business sector can all participate and influence the result. In other words, this is a new governance arrangement, which shall mitigate housing and transport infrastructure shortages in Sweden by forming new public-private partnerships.

In Stockholm, the responsibility is spread over different actors both vertically (i.e. between different scale levels), and horizontally (i.e. within each scale level). In the Stockholm region, Swedish Transport Administration develops, constructs and strategically plan for national transport infrastructure such as state-owned roads and the heavy railway-network. Swedish Transport Administration also (co)-finances transport infrastructure projects such as regional projects for public transportation. These financial resources are planned and allocated in the Stockholm county transport infrastructure plan (Länsplan för regional transportinfrastruktur i Stockholms län 2014–2025), a plan that is developed by the County Administrative Board. However, the financial framework allocated to the county transport infrastructure plans are set and decided by the Swedish Government. The (Stockholm) county transport infrastructure plan comprises elements of investments in state-owned roads that are not part of the main national road network; and co-finance of some regional projects for public transport which follows the decree for state co-finance to regional public transportation installations (SFS 2009:237).

At the same time, Stockholm County Council is responsible public transportation and manages public transportation in Stockholm county, and develops a regional traffic maintenance program etc. When the program was developed for the first time in 2012 it was based on the regional plan (RUFS2010). The traffic maintenance program was also based on the municipal comprehensive plans and other strategic documents (see more in Regionalt ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

trafikförsörjningsprogram för Stockholms län). In terms of spatial planning, this document is not comprehensive and strategic with a diverse set of spatial objectives as the regional plan. Instead the traffic maintenance program for public transportation solely focuses on the development of public transportation the upcoming years and is therefore rather theme specific. Visions and ideas of a polycentric development including regional cores and a better integrated transportation system in a larger regional perspective in Mälardalen, is nevertheless included in the content of this program.

Improving intraregional connectivity is clearly a spatial objective in the regional plan in Stockholm, and emphasized as a necessity to achieve the desired development of a polycentric and balanced territorial development (c.f. Chapter 4). However, spatial objectives in Swedish regions are mainly delimited to municipal comprehensive plans or other municipal documents, and to a lesser extent in regional development programs developed by the regional actor who is delegated the responsibility for regional development/growth issues. The Stockholm region is the only region in Sweden who has a regional planning administration who on a relatively regular basis develop a regional plan that covers the entire county (e.g. RUF2001; RUF2010). This means that in the Stockholm region, spatial objectives are also formulated in the regional plan (RUF2010), where a polycentric and balanced region is a key objective. An objective where good intra- and interregional connectivity become a prerequisite for achieving it.

However, the spatial objectives formulated in the regional plan developed by Stockholm County Council encounter barriers and are dependent on decisions taken by the County Administrative Board of Stockholm. The regional plan is to a large degree dependent on the county transport infrastructure plan especially in terms of implementation but the coordination is challenging. In practice, the transport infrastructure planning often precede regional planning, i.e. the regional plan and its planning is related to the county transport infrastructure plan, rather than the other way around. Importantly, how this works in practice differs between the regions in Sweden. Ideally infrastructure policies/objectives should according to the National Traffic Administration be used as means to achieve the spatial objectives of the region, to some extent converge with the regional spatial objectives. It should however be recognised that these are two different types of plans with different rationalities; transport infrastructure is being developed when there is a need, rather than steering the development as the intention is with the regional plan.

Improving territorial connectivity is a matter of complexity, and there are several actors who in various forms coordinate and collaborate to improve the transportation infrastructure system. One example of this is Mälardalsrådet, The Council for the Stockholm Mälardalen Region which is an institutionalized collaboration between 57 municipalities and five County Councils in eastern Sweden. It is a platform for collaboration between the public and private sector and academia, that aim to improve territorial connectivity in a larger functional regional ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

perspective and promote the metropolitan region as an internationally competitive and attractive region. Benchmarking and knowledge development are important tools for the council which was established in 1992 by regional politicians.

Within the issue of transport and accessibility the most evident relationship between EU policy with spatial planning and territorial governance in the Stockholm region is that actors can apply for EU co-funding within the TEN-T program or through other EU-programs rather than influencing spatial planning systems or territorial governance in general. These programs and co-funding are useful and facilitate the implementation of some infrastructure projects. In a report from 2007 Stockholm County Council highlights the importance of EU, TEN-T and its financial resources (Transeuropeiska transportnätverk (TEN-T) i Stockholm Mälardalenregionen, 2007).

In the Stockholm region, several large and important transport infrastructure projects have been implemented during 2000-2016, some with co-funding from EU and in accordance with TEN-T Priority Project 12 Nordic Triangle railway/road axis. Examples of completed projects are Södra Länken (Southern link) a motorway-tunnel in a west-east direction just south of Stockholm inner city; Citybanan (a six-kilometre railway-tunnel in a south-north direction through Stockholm inner city, this project was completed in 2017); and Norra Länken (Northern link, an equivalent project to Southern link but north of the inner city). The two motorway projects are also supposed to be part of a potential ring road in Stockholm. The Northern link project was furthermore co-financed by TEN-T (Trafikverket, 2010).

### **5.3. Recommendation**

Transport infrastructure and accessibility is clearly a concern for spatial planning and territorial governance but also a significant policy area in its own right at all levels from EU to the local level. It is evident that the European policies for transnational corridors (i.e. TEN-T) has permeated national and regional transport planning partly through the clear connection to funding opportunities. This is a thematic issue where multi-level governance becomes a prime concern but also horizontal coordination between and within regions are of importance since different regional authorities have different responsibilities and mandates in relation to infrastructure planning and provision. In addition, within this policy domain there exists parallel government arrangements (i.e. negotiation procedures between the state and local governments) which need to be adapted and related to the formal (and hierarchical) spatial planning system. Furthermore, it is also recommended that transport infrastructure is viewed both as a tool for spatial planning and as a policy field that through spatial planning can be integrated and coordinated with other policy fields such as housing.

## **6. Support for local economy issues in Stockholm region**

### **6.1. Thematic issues problems**

The Stockholm region is the capital region in Sweden and the economic conditions of region are good in a national and international comparative perspective (c.f. Figure 2-4). It has a diverse economy (RUFSS 2010; Hermelin & Smas 2010; Stockholmsregionens innovationsstrategi 2025) where the ICT-sector is increasing and the ICT-cluster in Kista attracts many international and national enterprises. Compared to the rest of the country, the financial sector and other knowledge-intensive business services (KIBS) has had a larger share of the region's total GDP, whilst construction, manufacturing and healthcare have had a smaller share of the region's total GDP (RUFSS 2010, p. 33). Amongst several actors in Stockholm county, growth has also for a long time been one of the keywords which has driven the development forward.

However, besides the fact that the region is quite prosperous, there is a clear northern-southern spatial division in the region. During the last decades, the northern parts of the region, from central Stockholm via Kista to Arlanda airport, have experienced a substantial economic growth compared to the rest of the region. The southern parts of the region have traditionally consisted of a larger share of manufacturing which have been more vulnerable to de-industrialisation and out-sourcing (Hermelin & Smas 2010, p. 7-11). The development of a strong economic and transport corridor north of central Stockholm has further strengthened the northern-southern division of the Stockholm region.

The regional development strategies of the region are rather non-spatial and focuses on the strengths of the region in terms of innovation strategies and development of the ICT-sector. But there are also strategies for the more sparsely populated areas of the region. There is for example an action programme for rural development, maritime and fisheries in the Stockholm region for the current programming period (2014-2020). It is a regional interpretation of the rural development programme in Sweden, on how to stimulate the economic growth for designated sectors and industries on the countryside in the Stockholm region.

### **6.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

Regional (economic) development and thus also support for the local economy issues is in the Stockholm region to a high extent clearly separated from the responsibility for regional spatial planning. The County Administrative Board of Stockholm is responsible for regional development and economic growth issues (e.g. innovation, R&D, labour market) and Stockholm County Council for regional spatial planning including the region's long-term spatial objectives. However, the current regional plan (RUFSS2010) was adopted as both a



regional development program (RUP) and a regional plan (the latter exist only as statutory spatial planning instrument in the Stockholm region in Sweden).

The County Administrative Board of Stockholm has developed similar regional development documents as other regions in Sweden, such as a regional programme for public and commercial services and an action programme for rural areas, maritime and fisheries. Some programmes or strategies are developed as the regional counterpart to national or EU programmes, including for example how the responsible regional actor should work to achieve the objectives. For instance, the action program for rural areas, maritime and fisheries in the Stockholm region for the current programming period (2014-2020) is the main regional document to steer operations, measures and interventions for rural development. The program consists of strategies for how the County Administrative Board of Stockholm should work to achieve the objectives outlined in the *Rural Development Programme in Sweden* and in the *Maritime- and Fisheries Programme in Sweden* for the current programming period. As such, the action programme for rural development in Stockholm is an important document in the region to steer the development in a direction so it is possible to achieve EU's objectives outlined in the framework of the growth strategy Europe2020. Also the European Regional Development Funds and the Social Fund are mentioned as important for achieving this development (see more in Regionalt handlingsprogram för Landsbygdsprogrammet och havs- och fiskeriprogrammet 2014-2020).

Furthermore, in the action programme for rural development, the County Administrative Board of Stockholm has prioritised eight areas based on a SWOT-analysis of the needs, objectives and opportunities in the Stockholm region. These are 1) strengthen the regional and global competitiveness, 2) innovation, 3) local production and local market, 4) cooperation, 5) reduced plant nutrient losses, 6) an open agricultural landscape, 7) organic production, and 8) climate adaptation and reduced negative impact on the environment (see more in Regionalt handlingsprogram för Landsbygdsprogrammet och havs- och fiskeriprogrammet 2014-2020). In other words, under their assigned competences for regional development and growth issues in the Stockholm region, the County Administrative Board has developed action programmes to achieve both EU and national objectives for rural development.

In addition to this, there is a regional programme for public and commercial services which also prioritise some issues that are of importance for several interventions, often in Stockholm archipelago and on the countryside (see more in Regionalt serviceprogram for Stockholms län 2014–2018). This include for example economic investment aid allocated to some retailers in rural areas, aiming at supporting them so as they can remain in less populated areas of the region. In the Stockholm region 40 companies in this sector are identified of which half of them are situated in Stockholm archipelago.

In addition to developing regional development policy-documents and programs which in many aspects are similar to other regions in Sweden, yet focused on the local context, the County Administrative Board of Stockholm has also developed several other policy-reports which are of relevance for stimulating and ensuring a global competitiveness in the region. It is therefore difficult to fully grasp all governance practices taken by the main actors to ensure a global competitiveness, but the County Administrative Board of Stockholm has the past few years developed reports and other documents that in various aspects aim to identify prioritised areas or strategical measures that need to be taken. For example, a document called *Strategic orientation 2012-2013* identified five issues of crucial importance for the development of the Stockholm region: 1) infrastructure, 2) Innovation Stockholm (*Innovationskraft*, a collaboration between several actors in the Stockholm region which aim to improve the innovative ability of the Stockholm region), 3) labour market and competences, 4) climate and energy, and 5) housing.

The County Administrative Board of Stockholm identifies policy-issues that are viewed as important for the region's competitiveness. Some of them are more directly related to spatial planning in a Swedish context than others. Housing, for example, is an integral part of the Swedish spatial planning discourse, which here is also viewed as one of several important issues for the Stockholm region's competitiveness (see also Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2012). This illustrates how regional development and spatial planning in practice are interlinked, through for example other policy domains such as housing, even if they are institutionally clearly separated from each other and governed by different legislations.

The County Administrative Board of Stockholm acts on behalf on the Swedish Government to develop programs for regional development and to allocate economic resources for specific enterprises in various sectors. For example, as noted on their website, the County Administrative Board receives state funding each year from the Swedish Government which should be used to support the local economy and different types of enterprises to stimulate their long-term businesses and economic growth of the region. The scope of the support, aid and programs that the County Administrative Board develops each year is dependent on decisions taken by the Swedish Government. In comparison to other regions in Sweden the support to the Stockholm region is limited (see <http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/stockholm/>).

Many regions in Sweden have develop Smart Specialisation Strategies (Tillväxtverket, n.d.). In the Stockholm region, there is no specific Smart Specialisation strategy (i.e. the terms smart specialisation is not used). But, the County Administrative Board of Stockholm developed already in 2012/2013 an innovation strategy for the Stockholm region: *The World's Most Innovation-Driven Economy*. This strategy was developed within a collaboration called *Innovationskraft* (Innovation Stockholm): a collaboration between the County Administrative Board of Stockholm, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm County Association of Local Authorities, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm Business Region, Stockholm Chamber of ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

Commerce, Stockholm County Council, Stockholm municipality and Stockholm University. In 2015, another policy-report was developed, that maps areas of strengths in the Stockholm region (see Länsstyrelsen, 2015). It is concluded in the report that the Stockholm region is well equated when it comes to knowledge-intensive businesses sector (KIBS). Within the research community it includes health, technology and natural sciences, and within the business community: financial services, the ICT-sector, creative and cultural sectors, green technology, trade, transport and the knowledge intense service sector (<http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/stockholm/>). In other words, in the Stockholm region the knowledge intense business sector with emphasis on the ICT-sector are in many aspects viewed as the strengths of the region, which differ from many other regions in Sweden such as Östergötland which are completely different types of regions (see the following chapters).

The innovation strategy for the Stockholm region and the collaboration of *Innovationskraft* is also recognised by the regional planning office at Stockholm County Council (<http://www.rufs.se/>). They have been involved in the collaboration especially when they developed an innovation procurement (Swe. Innovationsupphandling) as part of this collaboration. Besides this, regional development issues, particularly in terms of support for the local economy, is not viewed as a competence or a responsibility for the regional planning office at Stockholm County Council. The key role of spatial planning in this regard seems rather to be to point out spatial objectives for the future, and to convey structural changes in the economy and how it potentially will affect the geographical structure by providing localisation preferences etc.

It is not only public institutions such as the County Administrative Boards but also other actors such as the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce involved in regional development issues. They have also developed policy-oriented reports that for example argues that housing, infrastructure and other policy areas are of high importance for regional development and growth, and spatial development. As discussed in this chapter, these are policy areas which to a high extent are treated as separated from one another by for example the regional actors. Regional development issues and spatial planning are naturally related to one another but not necessarily in the relevant actor's territorial governance practices in the Stockholm region.

Finally, cohesion policy or other EU policies are mainly visible in some of the action programmes developed by the County Administrative Board of Stockholm or in the report that maps the strengths of the Stockholm region. The action programme for rural development is influenced by the EU because it is a programme that directs resources or strategies to achieve the objectives outlined in the *Rural Development Programme in Sweden*, in the *Maritime and Fisheries Programme in Sweden* and to achieve the objectives in Europe2020. The report that maps the strengths of the Stockholm region (see Länsstyrelsen, 2015) is also influenced by the idea of smart specialisation of which EU:s influences again are visible. However, spatial planning seems to be a policy area that stands alone, separated from this, ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

and these EU policies in regards to ensuring global competitiveness in the Stockholm region is not clear in terms of spatial planning in the Stockholm region. Instead it is clearly a competence, or a policy area that is part of the responsibility of regional development issues. However, spatial planning, and facilitation of a specific land-use, could naturally have impact of a region's global competitiveness, so in that regard spatial planning still plays an important role.

### **6.3. Recommendation**

Support for the local economy is in the Stockholm region an issue primarily dealt with through regional policies and not through spatial planning. Within the domain of regional policy, the support for local economy is an important measure to stimulate economic growth even in a rather prosperous region with a diverse economy but specialised within the knowledge intensive business sector such as Stockholm. However, the support for local economy becomes a diverse policy domain in a spatially and economic diverse region which consist of both sparsely populated areas, such as the archipelago that entails certain measures and supporting policy, and, urban growth corridors with significant ICT clusters.

Institutionally regional development and growth issues are the responsibility of the County Administrative Board, which is a national authority at the regional level, while the directly elected County Council is responsible for spatial planning and who has the mandate to produce the regional plan. However, the two organisations collaborated in the production of the current regional development plan (RUF 2010) that is both a regional plan according the Planning and Building Act and a regional development programme according to the Regional Growth Ordinance. It is recommended that this collaboration between organisations and integration of regional policy documents and spatial planning instruments continues if the aim is to strengthen the relationship and facilitate cross-fertilisation between EU cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice.

## 7. Support for local economy issues in Östergötland region

### 7.1. Thematic issues problems

Regional development documents in Östergötland describes the local economy as diverse with massive but diverse potentials for further development (see e.g. RUP Östergötland 2030; Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2007-2013; Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2014-2020; Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030; Regionalt Serviceprogram: Östergötlands län 2014-2020). In Östergötland, regional development issues have been delegated to different actors between 2000-2016. The establishment of Region Östergötland in 2015 was a significant institutional change which meant that regional development issues, public transportation, and healthcare issues were at that point merged into one major regional authority Region Östergötland.

The regional development program for Östergötland (RUP Östergötland 2030) focuses on economic growth in the entire region but the economic geographical structure is dominated by the two main cities of Linköping-Norrköping. Region Östergötland strives to create a balanced and polycentric development in the region (see also Regional Strukturbild för Östergötland, 2016). In addition to the fact that Linköping and Norrköping to some degree also have become more integrated into each other and 'metropolarised' steadily over the past years, the local economies and labour markets seem to complement each other:

“Linköping is oriented more towards research & development (R&D), government and other business functions, whereas Norrköping is strong in avant-garde cultural businesses (media and visualisation), transport and industry. This natural specialisation is likely to encourage economic development in both cities, as together the cities offer a more diverse business environment, and thus seem able to cater to the diverse locational needs that business have”. (Meijers et al. 2014, p. 43)

However, the region is larger than the twin-cities which also is emphasised in the regional development programme. For example, that it is a strong agricultural region – an industry which is believed to continue having a large importance in the region (RUP Östergötland 2030, p. 9). Tourism is also highlighted as an industry with large potential (RUP Östergötland 2030, p. 9), especially on the countryside (Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2007-2013; Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2014-2020; see also Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030). On the countryside, most local businesses consist of one-man enterprises which often focuses on one specific expertise which the regional programs for rural development have remarked as not meeting the demands of the local market which nowadays often demands comprehensive solutions (Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2007-2013; Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2014-2020). Accordingly, several challenges and trends concerning the local economy have been and remains to be a reality in Östergötland. This means, once again, that this issue is managed in various ways, where

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some local enterprises are entitled the right to apply for economical support while others only would benefit from a better integrated functional region in order to ensure regional competitiveness which would be based on strong local economies.

## **7.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

Measures and recommendations for concrete strategies to ensure regional competitiveness in Östergötland could quite easily be identified in different documents in the region. However, the relationship between spatial planning systems, territorial governance and cohesion policy regarding this theme is less clear. The thematic issue discussed in this chapter is undoubtedly a typical regional development issue in Sweden. It is of importance to highlight the regional development program and the governance practices in the region that in an interesting way attempts to connect objectives of rural and tourist development with the fast-growing service-based sector.

Region Östergötland has developed specific thematic and strategic programmes and documents for 1) public and commercial services, 2) the archipelago, 3) rural development, 4) broadband development and 5) energy and the environment; which demonstrate how some of the governance practices, in the region, in different ways are related to the thematic issue of supporting the local economy. The regional challenges in terms of the local economy are diverse, widespread and often related to agriculture, tourism development and public/commercial services on the countryside. However, some of them are managed by adapting to the current development in the local economy by preparing strategies that meet the potential future labour market so as to ensure economic competitiveness in the region. In other words, strategies for a service-based and high-qualified economy are also taken into consideration in the regional development practices – and not merely tourism development and agriculture issues.

The regional development program (RUP Östergötland 2030) discusses the relatively high unemployment rate and the increased demand for a better match between labour market and education (secondary and tertiary). As such, the program recommends the municipalities to customize their local education to match the demand of the local labour market. Other strategies such as to better develop cooperation between universities and businesses is also highlighted as important measures, as well as to, on a regional level, facilitate for regional cooperation in secondary education (RUP Östergötland 2030, p. 32-39). In addition, the general focus is to coordinate actors to facilitate the development of the entire region, especially the countryside including both tourism development and agriculture.

Region Östergötland has also developed a strategy for tourism development (Besöksnäringstrategi Östergötland). In that strategic document, but also in the regional development program, in the rural program and in terms of other governance practices in the

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region, it is evident that actors must collaborate to make the region more attractive for the local economy. The tourism industry is also pinpointed as of great potential, and has in several strategies been considered and discussed (e.g. Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2007-2013; Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2014-2020; Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030; Besöksnäringstrategi Östergötland 2016). Local assets such as the proximity to natural and recreational areas, in particular the archipelago, is proposed as tourism potentials that entail great opportunities for further development. However, there is constantly a question of conflict between development and conservation on the countryside, especially in areas with unique natural, cultural, landscape and recreational values.

The archipelago is a unique local asset (of national interest in accordance with the Environmental Code) both for conservation and tourism development in Östergötland. In collaboration with municipalities in the coastal area and in the neighbouring region of Småland, a common strategy for the development of the archipelago has been produced (Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030). In practical terms, the governance practices surrounding the collaboration of the archipelago is important since the outcome (the strategic document for the archipelago) has created a common ground for substantial measures to further support and develop those parts of Östergötland. For instance, some areas are emphasised as of interest for development while others for conservation or tourism development although there still are some national interests for protecting large parts of the coastline which thus restrict the development (see Chapter 9). The fact that the collaboration in the archipelago has resulted in a strategic document, also in collaboration with local actors and the civil society, facilitates for local enterprises and local actors to strategically know where to allocate their resources.

These governance practices, which in recent years have led to better coordination of those issues, that is strategies related to ensuring a global competitiveness in the region, is more tangible nowadays and seems to be part of the general governance practices in the region rather than in specific documents or themes. The example with the archipelago illustrates how different thematic issues are coordinated where an objective of creating and ensuring a competitive region is existence (implicitly and explicitly) in one way or another.

The regional rural development program also refers to various other programs, means or tools which all can be used to develop or stimulate the local development, local engagement, but also the local economy in terms of promoting enterprises and entrepreneurship on the countryside in Östergötland (Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2014-2020). Agriculture is for example a specific category of the local economy where economical means are directed, for example from the EU and through its funds (Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2014-2020). Generally speaking, the region aims to stimulate this development, and can in some cases also allocate economical means through specific funds, even though several of them are allocated through ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report

other national agencies where the applications at first place were submitted. For example, the regional service program in Östergötland points to the importance of commercial (and public) services on the countryside, such as supermarkets, in order to preserve the countryside as attractive sites for residents and small businesses (see also RUP Östergötland 2030). In this regard, The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth allocates economic means annually which local actors can apply for (Regionalt Serviceprogram: Östergötlands län 2014-2020, p. 19-20). For example to support the operational costs for small supermarkets on the countryside. The regional service program identifies the prioritized supermarkets for the upcoming year. Regional Östergötland also offers the opportunity for small- and medium sized companies on the countryside to apply for micro economical investment support (<https://www.regionostergotland.se/>).

In other words, there are several ways the local economy is stimulated under the competence of traditional regional development issues in Östergötland. In some cases, coordination of actors and collaboration between regional and local actors tend to, in an interesting way of governance practices, lead to actions which endeavours to ensure regional competitiveness where common place-branding strategies and strategic documents for the archipelago are some of the examples. Others are purely financial supports in terms of economical means allocated through different funds or through other authorities/agencies. However, some of the practices are rather related to developing a better and larger functional region, in which some regional documents, at least the past few years, have pointed to the importance of a regional planning perspective.

Recently, a non-statutory planning document, which adds a spatial layer to the regional development program through a spatial interpretation, has been developed by Region Östergötland in collaboration with the 13 municipalities. In that strategic document, the objective of a better and larger functional region is evident (Regional Strukturbild – för Östergötland 2016). Barriers to implement a larger functional region is for example the weak regional government level in Sweden, but also because of the strong municipal self-governments, or due financial factors. That is, the desired larger functional and polycentric development, which may stimulate a regional competitiveness, can face barriers in terms of going from an idea/objective to a reality/implementation.

The regional development program has a relation to the Operational Program within the objective of employment and growth for Östra Mellansverige. In that program, three prioritized areas are determined: 1) Strengthening research, technological development and innovation; 2) Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs; 3) Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy (Operativt program inom målet investering för sysselsättning och tillväxt 2014-2020), which in turn is a document that influences the practices of the regional actors who are delegated regional development competences. The current regional development program in Östergötland was yet developed prior the current programming period. However, all regional ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report



development documents in Östergötland have a relation to OP, because they point towards the importance of entrepreneurship, innovations and development of the local economy, which the operational program perceives as in line with their priorities in the current programming period for the European Regional Development Funds.

Other practices influenced by this is prevalent in Östergötland, such as Region Östergötland's work with the smart specialization strategy for Östergötland, which has identified five areas of regional strengths. These are strategies prepared with the purpose to stimulate regional competitiveness (see <https://www.regionostergotland.se/>). The five areas in Östergötland are 1) Effective logistics, 2) Business models and arenas for sustainable system solutions, 3) Smart, secure and robust connected products and systems, 4) Simulation and visualization, and 5) Advanced materials.

The relationship between EU, Cohesion Policy, and spatial planning often take place through different EU-funds, but also that some of the objectives from EU2020 or Cohesion Policy is visible in some of the regional policy/strategic documents. However, in Östergötland these overarching programmes do not seem to be discussed on a regular basis among practitioners or in local planning documents. Instead the tangible ways, where Cohesion Policy is tingled down, are through projects, knowledge exchanges or through financial supports. In other words, they are most tangible in projects such as Interreg projects. For example, in the current programming period there is an Interreg Europe project in Östergötland called Green Pilgrimage which aims to "... show policy makers how to protect natural and cultural heritage whilst developing jobs and growth along pilgrim routes through developing low impact tourism, digitalization, pilgrim accommodation and strengthening local traditions. This reconnects pilgrims with their environment, landscape and culture." (<https://www.interregeurope.eu/greenpilgrimage/>). This Interreg project, which started in 2017 combines objectives of growth and sustainable development and aim to "show how growth and development policies can economically exploit AND protect natural and cultural heritage" when it is finalized by the end of 2021.

In sum, to ensure global competitiveness of the regions based on strong local economies in Östergötland, spatial planning system, territorial governance and cohesion policy or other EU influences play a part. But they are expressed in different ways and seem to take an implicit role by influencing some of the regional policies and by being expressed through various projects with the aim of stimulating the local economy to some extent. Most evident is the allocation of financial resources, or different EU-projects, but in some cases spatial planning and territorial governance are more influential in terms of coordination, collaboration and cooperation between different actors on local and regional levels with the objective to stimulate the local development and to ensure a competitive region.

### **7.3. Recommendation**

Supporting the local economy to ensure global competitiveness and economic resilience of regions is most clearly a regional policy issue where the spatial planning system and territorial governance practices has more indirect impact. Furthermore, the thematic issue of support for the local economy is a rather general theme which might incorporate a number of different policy areas such as agricultural and rural policy; cultural, heritage and rural policy and retail policy, in which the spatial planning system are differently integrated and have different functions and mandates. It is thus important to clarify the issues at hand and identify important actors, institutions and policies involved (and not involved). Depending on the specified issues the spatial planning system and territorial governance practice could perform different functions. For example, spatial planning could steer developments towards certain areas to support local retailers or through regulation protect valuable agricultural land from development. However, it could also be recommended that spatial planning and appropriate planning instruments (i.e. the municipal comprehensive plan) is used to coordinate the different policy fields.

## **8. Peripheries and other specific regions in Östergötland region**

### **8.1. Thematic issues problems**

Östergötland as a peripheral region has challenges of depopulation (on the countryside), population ageing, low in-migration rate, impaired intraregional connectivity, reduced services (commercial and public) (e.g. RUP Östergötland 2030; Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2014-2020; Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030). However, it must be stressed that these challenges are unevenly distributed within the region and the local assets are diverse depending on the local and spatial context. The two main cities in the region, Linköping and Norrköping have, for example, some completely different prerequisites compared to other parts of the region. Linköping and Norrköping comprise of old industrial sites but they are also the cities in the region where most economic activity and tertiary education are concentrated (e.g. Linköping University is located both in Norrköping and Linköping). But the southern parts of Östergötland consist of rural areas, and is rather peripheral compared to other parts of the countryside which are in proximate to smaller cities or to other urban areas (see e.g. RUP Östergötland 2030; Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2014-2020). Moreover, the eastern parts of Östergötland are situated along the coastline which comprises a common and an internationally unique local asset – the archipelago.

The challenges for encouraging integrated development in cities, rural and specific regions are diverse and widely spread in the region. But as will be discussed below, Region Östergötland has also developed and prepared several documents in collaboration with for example the municipalities to create a common basis for substantial measures and actions which are necessary for the desired development in the region. Moreover, local actors also participate in projects and develop documents so as to identify practices to overcome issues in peripheral regions and to encourage integrated development in cities and rural areas. In Östergötland the regional level seems to coordinate those issues with spatial planning on the local level, and they recommend the local authorities to further work with those issues and to use spatial planning.

### **8.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

Region Östergötland has in their regional development program (RUP Östergötland 2030) prepared several strategies to manage the challenges in the region. One strategy is to encourage and promote a development of the entire region where the relationship/linkage between urban and rural areas are identified as important for interventions – particularly important is to take actions that are based on local strengths and opportunities (e.g. RUP

Östergötland 2030, p. 32 ff.). Region Östergötland has also prepared specific strategic, operational/interventional or regional development documents related to specific issues, such as the countryside, the archipelago and a regional program for public and commercial services etc.

Region Östergötland emphasizes in different ways the importance of a spatial perspective on issues of regional development. In addition to solely preparing a regional development program, Region Östergötland endeavours to coordinate traditional regional development issues (see e.g. RUP Östergötland 2030; Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2014-2020; Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030) with spatial planning by integrating different policy fields with spatial planning. The non-statutory regional spatial strategy (Regional Strukturbild – för Östergötland 2016) aims to add a spatial layer to the regional development program through a spatial interpretation and is the prime example of applying spatial perspectives on regional development. It was furthermore prepared and developed in collaboration with the municipalities so as to better encourage integrated development in cities and rural areas in the region. Spatial planning is otherwise a municipal mandate and strong municipal self-government fosters a scepticism towards top-down regional planning. A spatial perspective is furthermore supposed to be integrated with issues of regional development in all Swedish regions before 2020 according to Sweden's National Strategy for Sustainable Regional Growth and Attractiveness 2015–2020 (Government Offices of Sweden, 2015).

Encouraging integrated development in cities, rural and specific regions is a broad theme and thus generally difficult to grasp. Several actors (both public and private) are involved to encourage integrated development in cities and rural areas. Region Östergötland attempts to coordinate these issues by strategically identifying the main challenges in the region, but also to develop strategic documents that cover different challenges or issues. These documents such as the regional spatial strategy often relate to the regional development program, are based on it, or aim to contribute with valuable insights into issues in the region. Since spatial planning is primarily a municipal issue Region Östergötland perceives its own role as guiding for the municipal development by providing them with important inputs/ideas for spatial planning at the local level, for example inputs to the municipal comprehensive plans. This is further supported by the former and current national decree for regional development/growth (SFS2007:713; SFS2017:583), which states that work practices concerning regional development/growth should take the municipal comprehensive planning into account. In other words, there seems to be a relationship between regional development issues and municipal planning in Östergötland where both the regional and municipal levels influence each other but by different means.

To concretize a bit, the coordination between different actors on all scale levels seems to be central, but is also a reality for most of the practices in Östergötland related to this thematic issue. All actors have different but sometimes similar competences to encourage an integrated development in cities and rural areas. One example of this is that regional authorities (e.g. Region Östergötland) identify regional challenges that are presented in different (regional) documents which often are prepared together or in collaboration with local authorities, for example with the municipalities. As such, recommended necessary actions and measures are identified in the diverse strategic documents which cover specific issues and/or themes. These documents (e.g. *Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2014-2020*; *Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030*; *Regionalt Serviceprogram: Östergötlands län 2014-2020*) often assign different responsibilities, related to specific interventions, to the relevant actors on different scale levels.

The regional service program, for example, points to the importance of commercial (and public) services on the countryside, such as grocery stores, in order to preserve the countryside as attractive sites for residents and small businesses (see also *RUP Östergötland 2030*). In this regard, The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth allocates economic means annually which local actors can apply for (*Regionalt Serviceprogram: Östergötlands län 2014-2020*, p. 19-20), for example to support the operational costs for small supermarkets on the countryside. The regional service program identifies the prioritized supermarkets for the upcoming year, and it furthermore remarks some interventions that regional authorities have the authority to implement themselves. For instance, Region Östergötland can facilitate the desired development of which the regional service program highlights Region Östergötland's responsibility for public transportation as an important tool to make pinpointed sites on the countryside more attractive for commercial services. As such, this is remarked as important for encouraging integrated development in rural areas in Östergötland (see *Regionalt Serviceprogram: Östergötlands län 2014-2020*).

Public transportation, which is a regional responsibility (but also by locating healthcare institutions), is also a tool to steer this spatial development. It can for example be used to make some sites on the countryside but also within urban areas more attractive (e.g. for public and commercial services). Transportation and accessibility on the countryside are, thus, regarded as substantial, and smaller towns on the countryside are identified, at least from a regional point of view, as important nodes where the relationship between urban and rural areas can develop further.

Urban and rural relations are also a municipal issue. For example, both Norrköping and Linköping have chosen to encourage this relationship (between urban and rural areas) by clearly dividing their municipal comprehensive plans into three comprehensive plans: one for rural areas, another for urban areas, and one common to integrate the development between the two main cities in the region. Developing a common municipal comprehensive plan

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between two or more municipalities is also highlighted in the regional development program (RUP Östergötland 2030) as an important tool to develop a polycentric region where the relationship between the cores (cities and other urban areas) and rural areas can be strategically administrated so as an integrated development in cities and rural areas can be encouraged. Another interesting way how this coordination and relationship is being enacted in practice is evident in the regional program for rural areas and in the regional development program for the coastline and archipelago in Östergötland and northern Småland.

The relationship to the EU Cohesion Policy, spatial planning and territorial governance in this thematic issue is discernible both at a programme and project level in Östergötland. EU2020 has been influential in the development of the regional development program in Östergötland (RUP Östergötland 2030, p. 54), where an integrated development of cities and regions along with regional development issues is discussed in the program. The importance to further develop that in other regional and local strategic documents and to better integrate the regional development program in the municipal comprehensive plans in the region are also emphasized. However, EU2020 is less tangible in the region today compared to a few years ago. Nowadays, UN's Agenda 2030 seems to be the most influential international reference in the work practices in Östergötland. Concerning the input and support for agriculture on the countryside, the regional programs for rural areas (both in the current and the former programming period) refer and relate to EU's different funds, such as the structural funds, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, etc. The role of the EU in relation to agriculture in Östergötland is clearer than other issues in peripheral regions, even though the Rural National Development Programme for Sweden is cited several times.

However, EU policies are most tangible in projects, in knowledge exchanges or through different financial supports which often take place locally. One example of this cross-fertilization will be discussed in Chapter 11, which comprises an INTERREG V project, Baltic Urban Lab, partial funded by the European Regional Development Fund. It aims to develop and test a variety of new methods to support Public-Private-people partnerships in brownfield development which for instance take place in Norrköping. This is an example of how EU policy through the Interreg programme contributes to the development and introduction of new spatial planning practices, new modes of coordination or communication between public and private, increasing importance of participation/consultation, etc.

### **8.3. Recommendation**

Encouraging integrated development in cities, rural and specific regions to address challenges in peripheral, isolated and sparsely populated areas is an important spatial issue which the spatial planning system and territorial governance can address through various formal planning instruments primarily on a local and regional scale. If it is recognised that the

issue of peripheries (and thus implicitly also centres) is a spatial issue within municipalities and regions as much as between municipalities and regions it can be addressed through for example the municipal comprehensive plan, joint municipal comprehensive plans (which is a form of regional planning) or through specific municipal plans for urban and rural areas based in their place-based specificities. Regulatory national interests might infringe on local and regional initiatives but might also be utilised to identify and highlight primary local assets, e.g. where environmental protection can benefit tourism development. Furthermore, it is recommended that EU funding is utilised to experiment on how these local specificities might be utilised to support territorial cohesion and structural change in a region or part of a region.

## 9. Natural and cultural heritage issues in Östergötland region

### 9.1. Thematic issues problems

In Sweden and Östergötland, managing and connecting ecological, landscape and cultural values is a responsibility shared between several actors on different scale levels who can take decisions of preserving ecological, landscape and cultural values in line with the Environmental Code, Heritage Conservation Act etc. In Östergötland the archipelago and the coastline are for example a designated area of national interest (see Environmental code § 4; Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030, p. 41). An area can be of national interest for recreational purposes but also for preservation/conservation.

Furthermore, both the County Administrative Board of Östergötland and the 13 municipalities in the region can take decisions to establish a nature reserve. There are currently 244 nature reserves of which two are also culture reserves. The most nature reserves in Östergötland are maintained by the County Administrative Board of Östergötland, but around 20 are maintained and managed by the municipalities (<http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/Ostergotland>). In practice, the municipalities more or less only establish nature reserves in areas where they hold the landownership.

In addition to this are international protections such as Natura 2000. There are also two areas in Östergötland which the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) has pointed out as particularly valuable coast- and maritime areas, known as MPA-areas (Marine Protected Areas), previously known as Baltic Sea Protected Areas (BSPA-areas) (<http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/Ostergotland>). In general terms, authorities on all levels have an interest to manage and connect ecological, landscape and cultural values in Östergötland; some municipalities (e.g. Motala municipality and Linköping municipality) have even develop specific programs for nature protection (naturvårdsprogram). Yet again, it seems to be more common to discuss and strategically plan for the management of natural areas and cultural values in municipal comprehensive plans.

In sum, the ecological, landscape and cultural values are diverse and widely distributed across the region which include different types of interests and protections. For example, the unique coastline and archipelago is highlighted as important for preservation simultaneously as they are important for tourism and recreational purposes (Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030). However, in Östergötland this is managed in an interesting way and seems to work quite well, also in the cross-fertilization with the EU and its policies (see Chapter 10). Nevertheless, as will be discussed below, spatial planning has a quite straightforward role to play (also traditionally) in regards to this thematic issue. In general terms, the role of spatial planning is strategical but it also takes the form of being regulative (in line with various legislation).



## **9.2. Relationship between cohesion policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice**

Managing and connecting ecological, landscape and cultural values of regions is an issue that includes multiple actors at different levels. In practical terms, there are different types of protections which are created in line with various legislations where actors on different levels have different perspectives on the development and management in regards to this thematic issue. The discursive usage of the natural and cultural values in planning or policy documents is also of particular interest here in order to understand the role of spatial planning and territorial governance in this thematic issue (see more below). As mentioned above, the coastline and archipelago in eastern Östergötland is designated in the Environmental Code as of national interest, and as such regulated by the law. This is clearly a significant national influence on local and regional spatial planning and on conservation of cultural, natural and landscape values.

The coastline and archipelago is determined as an area of national interests which actors (public and private) on local and regional levels must relate to. Some parts of the coastline are both of national interest for preservation of natural- and cultural values, and for recreational purposes. To be regarded as a national interest for recreational purposes the area must consist of such high natural and cultural qualities and values (including good accessibility), so as they can be attractive sites for a large number of visitors. A recreational purpose is further broadly defined as sites which contain experiences of the nature, physical activities and relaxation (<http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/Ostergotland>).

The role of spatial planning systems and territorial governance in the management of natural and cultural heritage as such, is both regulative and strategical, which includes elements of coordination of actors but also decisions for local regulations and protection. Both policy documents and planning instruments highlight the importance of natural, landscape and cultural values, but they also identify areas of interests for further protection in various forms (e.g. in programs for natural protection). Also the regional development program, which mainly focuses on regional growth/development, points to the importance of natural/cultural values in the region. In that program, natural, landscape and cultural values such as the archipelago are important for attracting visitors or people to the region which in the end will lead to an improved local economy and to economic growth (c.f. RUP Östergötland 2030, p. 9, 29, 39). Furthermore, some municipal comprehensive plans (see <http://www.norrkoping.se/>) discuss the importance of natural and cultural values (including landscape values) in their municipalities, and convey them in a similar vein as the regional development program. That is as important values to attract visitors as well as to protect the biodiversity in the region.

Natural and cultural values in Östergötland seem (in most cases) to be used explicitly and implicitly in planning documents as important for two purposes: i) to preserve them in a sustainable way and as such also preserve biodiversity, ii) in the context of attracting tourists and/or residents which simultaneously would benefit the local economy. These values are furthermore preserved with different purposes and as such coordinated/managed by both regional and local authorities who can

take decisions to initiate protections such as nature or culture reserves or to strategically identify values of extra importance and consideration.

In a recent report developed by RUS (Regional Utveckling & Samverkan i miljömålssystemet) and three of the County Administrative Boards in Sweden, the cultural values in terms of preserving certain buildings was examined. It was noted that the property owners are the most important actors to preserve certain cultural values in buildings rather than to solely use regulative protections which, indeed, are noted as necessary in some cases (K-märkt?: Skydd av kulturhistorisk bebyggelse i den kommunala planeringen 2013). For example, the report notes that several buildings of particular interest for preservation in Östergötland (and in the other counties in the report) are located on the countryside and areas challenged with depopulation. A tangible risk is that the cultural valuable buildings in rural areas would remain or become abandoned and be exposed to decay. Instead of using formal protections, the recommended measures on the countryside are to inform the property owners of the cultural values and of the importance to maintain those values. However, under certain circumstances when it is necessary (for example in declining areas), a more realistic measure would be to support them with economical means (K-märkt?: Skydd av kulturhistorisk bebyggelse i den kommunala planeringen 2013, p. 21).

In general terms, managing and connecting ecological, landscape and cultural values occur strategically on different scale levels which sometimes relate to one another, but these values are in several cases protected in line with the Environmental code, Heritage Conservation Act etc. Under certain circumstances, it is remarked by some actors in Östergötland that the protection of buildings or other values, as in the example above, could be repressive for the actual preservation and development of some areas, while in other cases these measures are necessary. This illustrates that spatial planning systems and territorial governance are used in various and diverse ways to manage these issues.

Nevertheless, another important protection and tool which needs further attention is “the shore line protection” (strandskyddet) which prohibits development of buildings or adjustments of the current usage of buildings that are situated within 100 meters (or up to 300 meters after a decision from the County Administrative Board) to water areas (<https://www.boverket.se/>). The purpose of this protection is that ‘the shoreline’ is an important transition zone between land and water, which are considered as substantial areas for recreational purposes but also for natural habitats which are crucial for flora and fauna (<http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/Ostergotland>). However, since 2010 the municipalities are allowed to pinpoint areas in their municipal comprehensive plans which they consider as LIS-areas, that is important areas for rural development in proximate to water areas. Those areas are used when the protection of the shoreline is tested for exemptions (<https://www.boverket.se/>). There are yet some restrictions for the municipalities to freely pinpoint LIS-areas. The entire coastline in Östergötland is completely prohibited for becoming LIS-areas, and in the western parts of Östergötland next to the large lake of Vättern the municipalities must be very restrictive if they decide to pinpoint a LIS-area (<https://www.boverket.se/>). Interestingly, in

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Östergötland these restrictions are viewed as repressive to the rural development in the archipelago according to the municipalities. As such, the regional strategical development program for the coastline and archipelago, prepared by Region Östergötland in collaboration with the municipalities, argues that they would like to plan for a development of designated rural areas by densifying the already utilized areas and therefore better manage a potential conflict between tourism development/recreational activities and rural development in an early stage. Therefore, the municipalities request to be enabled to use the tool of pinpointing LIS-areas also along the coastline and in the archipelago which is prohibited today (Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030, p. 44). This is also something that Region Östergötland perceive as important for rural development in their regional program for rural development (Insatsprogram Landsbygd 2014-2020, p. 19) – that is the areas in the archipelago should be given the right to use LIS-areas as a tool to promote new development in rural areas and other operations/businesses.

In sum, spatial planning in terms of planning systems and territorial governance has a long tradition of managing ecological, landscape and cultural values both in Sweden and in Östergötland. The role of spatial planning is both strategical and regulative in regards to this thematic issue. However, there are some national influences/restrictions, yet limited but with a huge impact on the local level, such as the pinpointed national interests and the prohibition of LIS-areas along the coastline. These are regulative frameworks with the purpose of preserving certain natural, landscape and cultural but also recreational values which the regional and local authorities must relate to. There are still some interesting governance practices where Region Östergötland tries to coordinate those conflicts with the municipalities by developing common and regional strategical programs (for rural development and for the coastline/archipelago) where they can emphasize necessary measures for their desired development. Unless there are local regulations, the regional and local authorities can only keep lobbying to the national level to make change happen. Nevertheless, this illustrates that they at least collaborate with each other to create a common ground for substantial measures.

### **9.3. Recommendation**

The spatial planning system is fundamental for environmental protection and cultural heritage. All levels (national, regional and local) have planning instruments that can be used to ensure the preservation of ecological lands and cultural values, e.g. designation of national interests or the creation of natural and cultural reserves. But the issue of managing and connecting ecological lands and cultural values in regions is also partly beyond the scope of the main regulatory spatial planning system and needs to be coordinated with both public and private actors. Furthermore, environmental protection and cultural heritage are two different policy areas most evidently on the national level but also at the regional level where two regional authorities have different mandates. It can be recommended that this could be more coordinated and integrated. To avoid potential conflicts between growth and preservations the rationales for designating environmental areas and cultural

heritage should be clear, i.e. the relation between their intrinsic value and their value as a resource for regional development should be discussed.

## **10. Good practices in Östergötland region to overcome problems in peripheral and other specific regions**

The municipality of Norrköping, a medium sized city in the region of Östergötland, is aiming to develop its inner harbour area close to the railway station to an attractive urban neighbourhood. An important precondition for the development is the continuous transformation of the local economy from industrial-based to service and logistic based, a restructuring process resulting in abandoned and underutilised harbour infrastructure. The planning of the area is also closely connected to the proposed new high-speed rail way which will improve the transport and accessibility of the city and the region, which might be considered as window of opportunity for urban development. (However, the proposal for a new high-speed rail way system connecting the three metropolitan areas of Malmö, Gothenburg and Stockholm is debated.) An important issue in the project brown field urban redevelopment project is how to remediate the contaminated soils in the area.

The Inner Harbour project is a pilot test site in the Interreg project Baltic Urban Lab. A project that aims to develop and test a variety of new methods to support public-private-people partnerships in brownfield development. In Norrköping a tool that enables 3D visualisations of below ground level is developed that makes underground pollution visible. The tool is based on a previous work and experimentation with using 3D models in city planning. The results from this has been good with over 400 participants representing wider demographic coverage than usual. The City of Norrköping are thus within the Baltic Urban Lab developing this tool so it also can visualize “what cannot be seen with eyes – making the pollution in underground level visible” (<http://www.balticurbanlab.eu/sites/inner-harbour>) The new tool can in similar manner be used in planning and decision-making process as a platform for communication between different stakeholders (citizens, planners, developers, politicians). This is an example of how EU policy through the Interreg programme contributes to the development of a new spatial planning instruments (a visualizing tool) that facilitates new spatial planning practices including new possibilities for enhanced citizen participation and communication between public and private. It is also a project that facilities cross-border learning (i.e. between Tallinn, Riga, Turku, and Norrköping).

## 11. Good practices to overcome problems of natural and cultural heritage in Östergötland region

The archipelago in Östergötland have unique natural and cultural values. It is designated in its entirety as an area of national interest because of its natural and cultural environment in the Swedish Environmental Code where special consideration shall be given to the interests of tourism and outdoor recreation. It is a rural and peripheral area where it is also difficult to establish permanent jobs. There are a thus number of challenges for regional development related to simultaneously protecting and developing the natural and cultural heritage of area, including tensions between agricultural and maritime interest, tourism development and environmental protection but also related to depopulation and demographic issues, support for local economy. The regional authority *Region Östergötland* is here an important coordinating actor for spatial planning and territorial governance since it is responsible for regional development issues, even if it does not have any legal spatial planning mandate.

How *Region Östergötland* is working strategically with coordinating different policy fields to address these issues can be regarded as a good practice of cross-fertilising EU policies with territorial governance and spatial planning and in solving problems in thematic issues. EU policies are on the one hand directly mentioned as the basis for regional policies and indirectly discernible in new (non-statutory) spatial planning instruments. On the other hand, EU programmes (most evidently Interreg) and funding are used to implement, facilitate and support different projects aiming at overcoming challenges related to for example preserving the natural and cultural heritage and developing new innovations and business opportunities related to for example blue growth. The good practice is thus a combination of utilising different regional and spatial planning instruments to coordinate different policy fields and implicitly EU policies, and to use EU programmes and funding to in practices explore innovative ways of addressing specific problems of spatial planning and territorial governance related to EU Cohesion Policy.

EU's agenda for growth and jobs has been an important background document for the Regional Development Program (Regional utvecklingsprogrammet RUP) in Östergötland. Both the EU 2020 Strategy and Sweden's national reform programme 2011 is explicitly mentioned in the development program. All regions in Sweden are obliged to develop regional development programs which should be a comprehensive strategy for the regional development in the region and as such for the basis for regional structural funds programs, territorial programs, regional growth programs et al.

The *Region Östergötland* has also developed a non-statutory regional spatial strategy to translate the regional development strategies into spatial regional planning. An objective with the regional spatial strategy (Strukturbild) is to coordinate the regional development program (RUP) with the regional transport plans (Länstransportplanen and Trafikförsörjningsprogrammet) and the spatial planning in the municipalities. The regional spatial strategy is not a statutory planning instrument but coordinates different policy fields and is an important policy tool highlighting spatial priorities, e.g. important nodes and transport corridors.

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*Region Östergötland* has also developed a specific targeted program for rural development (Insatsprogram för landsbygd 2014-2020). It is highlighted that EU's programmes and structural funds should be utilised for the implementation of the programme. The national Sweden - Rural Development Programme and Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) is mentioned as particularly important. The Region has also continuously been involved in different Interreg programmes which has had direct impact on spatial development.

Furthermore, the Region has in collaboration with coastal municipalities and the adjacent region developed a joint programme for the archipelago (Gemensamt utvecklingsprogram för kust och skärgård i Östergötland och Norra Småland 2030). The objective of the programme is to develop an archipelago that through its unique natural- cultural and recreational values is attractive for both residents and visitors, as well as for the different types of businesses (i.e. both services as well as agriculture).

During the programming period 2007-2013 the region was the lead partner in the Central Baltic INTERREG IVA project Interreg project BACES - Baltic Archipelago and Island Centres that ran from May 2010 to April 2013. (see: <http://www.bacesmaps.eu/about-the-baces-project/>). The objective of the project was to accelerate regional economic growth through and to improve pre-conditions for living, working and visiting in the archipelago and islands area, area with focus on accessibility, economy and environment, and address issues of natural environments assets for sustainable tourism. One part of the project was the development of "Skärgårdslinjen i Östergötland", a charter boat connection that has been highlighted by the national agency responsible for rural and regional development as a good example of how structural funds contributed to local and regional development in specific areas.

Currently Region Östergötland is lead partner in the EUSBSR flagship Interreg-project Baltic Blue Growth (see <http://projects.interreg-baltic.eu/projects/baltic-blue-growth-11.html>). It is another example of how a project funded by the European Regional Development Fund is used to initiate, facilitate and spur local development and use resources (i.e. demonstrate how). Like many rural areas, it is difficult to establish permanent jobs, and in the archipelago region, it is even more difficult given stringent environmental policy in the area. The primary goal of the project is to demonstrate the potential for an industry with a positive impact on the environment and the creation of jobs in the region. It is targeted towards the specific objective of blue growth within the priority area of natural resources.

Managing and connecting ecological, landscape and cultural values of the archipelago region is thus done through spatial planning and territorial governance practices which utilises both various statutory and non-statutory planning and governance instruments to translate EU policy to local conditions and simultaneously utilise EU funding for supporting projects that facilitates policy implementation. This is thus an example of how EU policy and funding seems to be influencing the territorial governance practices of a region and how it influences both planning issues and project (islands, natural and cultural heritage), but how it is related and might influence/facilitate indirectly new modes of practices coordination or communication between levels and/or agencies at the same level.

## 12. Conclusions

Spatial planning in Sweden to a large extent is a local issue regulated by a national legal framework. But the national authority for housing and planning has identified that there are 21 different policy domains that are of importance for spatial planning in Sweden with 28 different national authorities responsible for the around 100 different national goals relevant for planning (Boverket, 2011, p. 17). The regional level is emphasised as important to concretise these goals for implementing, which however is difficult because of the different character of the goals but because they often derive from the national budget proposals (Boverket, 2014, p. 10). In similar vein, the relationship between Cohesion Policy, spatial planning systems and territorial governance in practice might be understood. There are few direct and obvious linkages between Cohesion Policy and spatial planning but through different territorial governance practices EU policies and programmes as well as EU funded projects influence and impact spatial planning in Sweden. In addition, the EU discourse (e.g. concepts such as polycentricity and transport corridors) permeate various spatial planning documents and practice although it is often indirect and the casual relationship to EU policies and programmes are indecisive.

EU Cohesion Policy is implemented mainly through EU programmes (and EU funded projects) and is in Sweden primarily related to regional development and growth issues (i.e. most clearly connected to the thematic issues of peripheral areas and support for local economy). Cohesion policy programmes are organised in a variety of ways across Europe, and national, regional, transnational and cross-border programmes co-exist. The respective programming, management and monitoring arrangements form a complex and inter-related system of territorial governance. Sweden has adopted a centralised management for the national programmes but also with regionally decentralised management related to Cross-border, transnational and interregional co-operation (see table 2).

The operational programmes are in general more related to regional policy rather than spatial planning, and made tangible to regional development programmes (which in Sweden are statutory under the Regional Growth Ordinance). However, there are significant interrelations between regional policy and spatial planning in Sweden which are to a certain degree coordinated at national and regional level. For example, there are emerging territorial governance practices with non-statutory planning instruments, such as regional development strategies developed in Östergötland (and Skåne and Gothenburg et al) that aim to add spatial perspectives to the regional development programmes. There have also been joint initiatives by the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, and Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth to coordinate regional development programmes with municipal comprehensive plans, and also proposals for mandatory regional spatial plans.

All the thematic issues analysed in this report are interlinked in multiple and intricate ways through territorial governance practices in many cases at the regional level. Polycentricity and suburbanization is an important theme primarily in the larger urban areas but an issue that is closely dependent on transport infrastructure and accessibility. Transport infrastructure is a potential spatial planning tool to steer spatial development that can be used by regional authorities that in Sweden does not have any formal spatial planning instruments at their disposal. For example, through their mandate of providing ESPON / COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe / Volume 6 of Final Report



public transport infrastructure the regional county councils can steer and influence spatial development within the region and promote polycentricity. The issue of peripheral regions is closely connected to support for the local economy, i.e. the problems associated with peripheral regions are addressed through various measures to support the local economy and utilising the territorial potentials of the specific region (c.f. place-based policy and smart specialisation). Territorial governance is a crucial issue as it also points towards the importance not only of place in an absolute sense but in a more relation spatial perspective. In practice, this translates to questions regarding the scale and geographical of policies. Polycentricity at what scale regional or national? For example, the transport corridors might facilitate a polycentric development on a national or even Nordic scale (i.e. the Nordic triangle). In Sweden, the development in peripheral and sparsely populated areas is a concern but it is not only peripheral regions there are also peripheries within regions (even in metropolitan areas like the capital region).

Natural environment and cultural heritage are both integral parts of the Swedish planning system through the planning legislation. Even if they are to a large degree separate policy fields governed by different national agencies and ministries. Furthermore, at regional level there is a division between more regulatory and protective issues related to the protection and management of the natural and cultural heritage often under the mandate and competences of the County Administrative Board, i.e. the national institution at regional level, and the more development and growth oriented tasks performed by the directly elected County Councils. The dual regional structure is less obvious in regards to other thematic issues and policy domains such transport infrastructure and accessibility where the two regional authorities have different (complementary) tasks related to spatial planning.

EU policies programmes and EU funding are important for providing additionality and possibilities for project based experimentation that might facilitate structural change and territorial cohesion. The connection between EU Cohesion Policy, spatial planning and territorial governance is most clearly manifested through EU funded project, for example INTEREG projects (see the identified good practice examples in Östergötland).

In conclusion, the regional level in Sweden seem to function as multi-level coordination institutions of policy integration, i.e. as a territorial governance institution that assist in active cooperation across government, market and civil society actors to coordinate decision-making and actions that have an impact on the quality of places and their development. But the municipalities are the prime institutions that have the mandate to mediate competition over the use of land and property, to allocate rights of development, to regulate change and to promote preferred spatial and urban form in accordance with the legal framework and policy objectives provided by the national authorities

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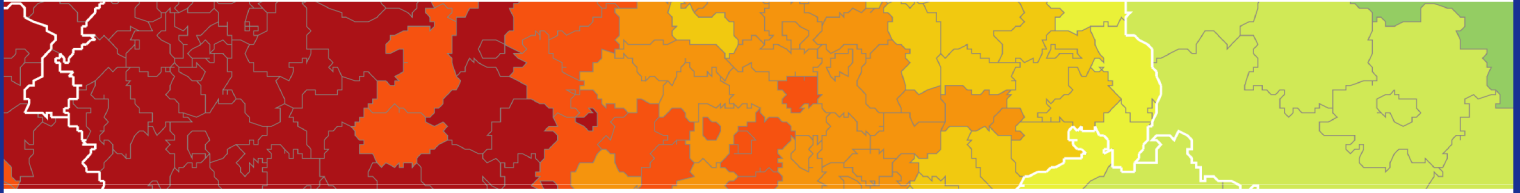
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## 14. Appendix

List of persons interviewed:

<b>Lp.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Affiliation /Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>
1	1 <sup>st</sup> Sep 2017	Daniel André	National Board of Housing, Building and Planning
2	1 <sup>st</sup> Sep 2017	Roland Engvist	Stockholm County Council
3	1 <sup>st</sup> Sep 2017	Ulrika Palm	Stockholm County Council
4	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2017	Sigrid Hedin	Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth
5	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2017	Anders Bäckstrand	Region Östergötland
6	5 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2017	Sandra Olivare Costa	Nordregio
7	20 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2017	Anna Wildt-Persson	Swedish Transport Administration
8	22 <sup>nd</sup> Sep 2017	Anna Jacobson	Region Östergötland
9	27 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2017	Anders Hedlund	Swedish National Heritage Board



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