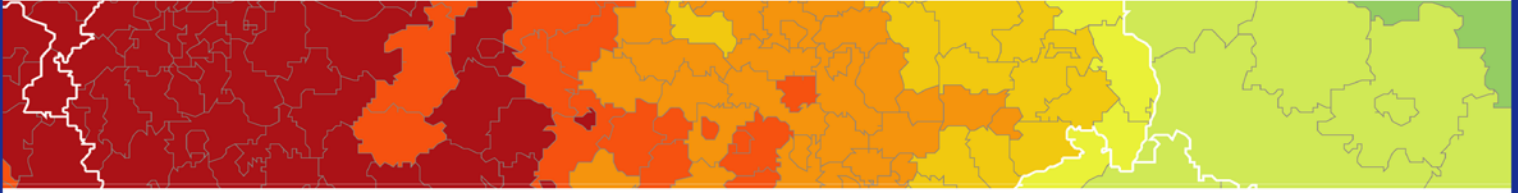


Inspire policy making by territorial evidence



PROFECY – **Processes**, **Features** and **Cycles** of Inner Peripheries in Europe

(Inner Peripheries: National territories facing
challenges of access to basic services of general
interest)

Applied Research

Final Report

Annex 1. Conceptual Framework

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PROFECY – Processes, Features and Cycles of Inner Peripheries in Europe



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Abbreviations

CLLD	Community-Led Local Development
DFR	Draft Final Report
ESIF	European Structural & Investment Funds
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
EU	European Union
IP	Inner Periphery(ies)
ITI	Integrated Territorial Investment
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
PROFECY	Processes, Features and Cycles of Inner Peripheries in Europe
SGI	Services of General Interests

1 What the academic literature tells us

1.1 The changing concept of distance

At face value, the two words “Inner” and “Periphery” do not seem to fit together, rather they contradict each other; how can a locality be both “on the edge” and “inner”? In order to understand what is meant by this term it will be necessary to explain how it is the “child” of certain changes both in the policy and academic discourses, and, more fundamentally, of very important real-world socio-economic trends.

In recent years the original (spatial) meaning of the term “peripherality”, which was all about the economic and social costs and penalties faced by locations at a distance from the main “hubs” of economic activity in Europe, where the benefits of agglomeration economies were maximised, has become associated with a range of “analogous” meanings, which are to do with socio-economic “marginality” in an aspatial sense¹ (p. 368). Within this project however the term “peripheralization^a” is preferred to “marginalisation”, since the former draws attention to the role of connectedness (spatial or not, see below), whereas the latter may simply denote low levels of socio-economic development or performance, for whatever reason.

Our world has changed: New information and communication technologies are gradually, selectively and subtly transforming the environment within which interactions (between individuals, businesses, and institutions) take place. Gradually, both within academic circles and within popular culture, we are changing our concepts of “space” and “proximity”. Geographical, or “Euclidean” space is still the context for flows of goods, and service interactions which necessitate physical face-to-face contact - basic physics suggests that this will always be so. In this sphere, proximity is still measured in kilometres, travel-time, or travel-cost. However, it is also true that our economy and society are increasingly dependent upon flows of information as well. In this arena physical distance, travel time and travel cost are no longer the key constraints to interaction. Information can travel across networks where other forms of “organised proximity” (social, legal, institutional) matter much more².

According to Bock³ (p. 5) “Whereas in the past, the main cause [of uneven development] was ascribed to geography, this has changed in the sense that the lack of resources is now explained as resulting from a lack of socioeconomic and political connections (‘connectivity’) and, hence, of relational ‘remoteness’ that is not necessarily bounded to geographical location...Geographical remoteness, as such, therefore does not cause marginalisation, nor does central location promise prosperity”

As a consequence of the rising importance of this second kind of networking it is now possible to conceive of the peripherality of a locality on two distinct levels – in a geographical sense, and in terms of “organised proximity”.

^a Here we use the American spelling, with a “z”, since the concept originated with a US sociologist, and much of the European literature also follows the US spelling.

Such a view of the world, where every locality, business, institution and individual operates within both geographical space and within aspatial networks is the key to understanding and distinguishing the several “faces” of the concept of “inner peripheries”. In this project we will not attempt to establish a single definition. Instead we will consider the various manifestations, explain how they relate to each other within a common conceptual framework, and explore their implications in terms of delimiting their incidence across Europe, and in terms of the intervention logic(s) for policy.

1.2 A hybrid concept combining two strands of research

The Inner Periphery concept which has emerged in the European regional policy discourse seems to have two “roots”. Both of these originated independently during the 1970s and 1980s. At that time there was little interaction between them. However, more recently, features of both have been incorporated into the same policy discourse, increasing its chameleon-like flexibility rather than its coherence. The first of these owed much to positivist spatial analysis, whilst the second emerged from the structuralist school. A key name in the first was David Keeble, whilst Immanuel Wallerstein was founding father of the second.

1.2.1 Mapping Economic Potential

During the 1980s and '90s considerable efforts were made to measure spatial peripherality, using various spatial models, especially one which used Newtonian gravity as an analogy for “economic potential”^{4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11}. Economic potential was in many ways an indicator designed as a proxy to measure the effects of agglomeration, as described by classic regional development models of Myrdal¹², Hirschmann¹³ and Friedmann¹⁴, and more recently quantified by the New Economic Geography school¹⁵. Many very attractive maps were produced, the parameters of the models were carefully tested and adjusted using different forms of transport to explore the assumed effects of geographic peripherality on different aspects of economic and social activity.

Those involved in this research were very aware that such adjustments could have the effect of either accentuating continental scale differences between the outer-most regions of Europe and the core regions (sometimes known as “the blue banana”), or of highlighting smaller scale differences *within* countries^{16,17}. Such “enclaves” of peripherality were particularly striking if they were identified in what is commonly known as “Central Europe”. However it is fair to say that, since this research roughly coincided with the accession of Spain and Portugal (1986), and Sweden, and Finland (1995), the focus of the policy debate was very much upon the kind of peripherality experienced by the sparsely populated regions of the North and the West. In fact, although the peripheral regions of the Iberian Peninsula qualified for designation under Objective 1 of the Structural Fund, the better performing Nordic regions were given a new designation (Objective 6) on grounds of their peripherality. Central European “enclaves” (many of them still outside the EU at this stage), received little explicit policy recognition or research attention at this time.

Although it was widely assumed that the effects of peripherality could be predicted as a function of distance from centres of economic activity, academics were pointing out that despite the sophistication of the models and the maps, and the high level theorising about agglomeration, we understood much less about the socio-economic processes which translated these into local variations in socio-economic performance. Even as early as 1969 Peter Gould stated that peripherality was "...a slippery notion...one of those common terms everyone uses until faced with the problem of defining and measuring it"¹⁸ (p.17).

1.2.2 The Modern World System, the Semi-Periphery, and Peripheralization

The American social historian Immanuel Wallerstein^{19,20} is generally associated with the structuralist perspective which comprehends both modern history and the geography of development on a grand scale. The key aspect of this theory is the division of the world's countries into three groups, the core, the periphery, and the semi-periphery. This typology is associated with the distribution of power, and processes of capitalist exploitation, whereby the core's economic development was dependent upon cheap sources of raw material and labour in the periphery. Semi- periphery countries shared in the exploitation of the periphery, and aspired to become part of the core, but lacked their freedom of action and dominance.

The inner/internal periphery concept seems to have been strongly influenced by the Modern World System theory. Early applications of the term were to Appalachia^{21,22} and Lesotho²³. In a European context Nolte^{24,25} argued that enduring inner peripheries of Southern Europe owe their existence to being for many centuries in the border-region between the Christian and Muslim worlds. Vaishair and Zapletelova²⁶ in their study of small towns in Moravia describe sparsely populated areas along national borders and where the topography is hilly as an internal periphery. They also refer to the Alps as being an inner periphery "from a West European view"²⁴ (p.72). Similarly, in a Russian context Kaganskii²⁷ defines the inner periphery in terms of rural areas which are relatively close to centres of economic activity, but nevertheless lagging themselves.

Naumann and Fischer-Tahir²⁸ (p.9) have recently argued that peripheries are social constructs, rather than fixed geographical features; "we interpret "peripheries" as the outcome of complex processes of change in the economy, demography, political decision-making and socio-cultural norms and values."

Reviewing recent literature relating to rural decline in Germany, the same authors²⁶ (p.17) point to "the multilayered disconnection of rural regions and their marginalization, ... the new peripheries as disconnected in economic terms and as areas facing rapid demographic change and population ageing. Poor infrastructure, e.g., public transport, health facilities and educational services, lead to loss of quality of life for the inhabitants concerned. In concert, the media abounds with negative images, e.g., newspaper articles on "dying villages" and "empty" regions plagued by unemployment and alcoholism, and "contaminated" by right-wing extremism ..."

What is striking about the recent sociological literature is that it focuses very much on the process of “peripheralization” rather than with mapping or measuring it. Thus:

*“Peripheralization refers to a spatially organized inequality of power relations and access to material and symbolic goods that constructs and perpetuates the precedence of the centres over areas that are marginalized. Since peripheries are frequently localized as or within regions conceived in dominant discourses on a national or transnational scale as the apparently “natural” edges - such as border or other regions spatially removed from the centres of capital accumulation and the production of things with a recognized exchange value, the territorialization of peripheries fosters their reification. ... The label “peripheral” is predominantly attached to the rural areas and small and medium-sized towns or to space within large urban agglomerations that are marginalized in terms of income opportunities, housing, traffic structures, and access to educational, medical or other infrastructural facilities.”*²⁶ (p.18-19)

In an interesting twist Leibert²⁹ links peripheralization in post socialist Central and Eastern Europe to Scholz’s theory of “Fragmented Development”, which argues that globalisation has increased global inequalities, with the result that some rural areas are increasingly becoming “new peripheries... home to people who are redundant as workers, consumers and producers.”

Because it is liberated from fixed or slowly changing geographical features, operating within socially constructed space and networks, peripheralization as a process is extremely flexible in terms of context and scale – it can be applied to countries, regions, cities or neighbourhoods¹ (p.369). However, Kuhn goes on to explain, herein lies a pitfall – it becomes indistinguishable from the concept of marginalisation. Similarly Naumann and Fischer-Tahir note that “... the theoretical saturation of the term constitutes a deficit, leaving unsettled the question of whether the peripheralization approach can produce a more substantial theoretical concept. ... is peripheralization just another word for spatially structured political and social- marginalization and dependency?”²⁶ (p.10).

2 Inner Periphery in the European Regional Policy Discourse

As far as we are aware the term “inner periphery” (or in this case “internal periphery”) was first used in a European policy document in the background report prepared for the Territorial Agenda 2020 meeting in Gödöllő, Hungary in 2011³⁰. The description is quoted below at length, since it seems to be the starting point for the subsequent discussion of inner peripheries:

“Internal peripheries are unique types of rural peripheries in European terms. The vast majority of these areas are located in Central and Eastern and in Southeast Europe and most of them have serious problems. Their peripherality comes primarily from their poor accessibility and paucity of real urban centres where central functions can be concentrated. These problems derive from the historical under-development of these territories and they are often compounded by specific features of the settlement network or social characteristics. The main problems of these areas are their weak and vulnerable regional economies and their lack of appropriate job opportunities. In these circumstances negative demographic processes, notably out-migration and ageing of the population, are getting stronger and stronger. These trends create the conditions for social exclusion, and even territorial exclusion, from mainstream socio-economic processes and opportunities. While rural ghettos are mainly a result of social factors, ethnic segregation can make difficult situations worse. This is the case, for example, in rural peripheries of Slovakia, Hungary and Romania where there are areas with high proportions of Roma population.”²⁸ (p.57)

Later in the document the authors call for analysis of internal peripheries by the ESPON programme²⁸ (p.87).

There is no reference to “internal peripheries” in the final TA2020 text^b, which is presumably why the ESPON Geospecs project concluded “The concept of Inner Peripheries (IP) as such is new in the European policy arena, as illustrated by the fact that there are no policy documents dealing explicitly with it...”³¹ (p.1). The Geospecs team also (surprisingly) find no academic literature, and proceed to base their report on interviews with policy stakeholders in Belgium, Netherlands and Germany. They conclude that inner peripheries are defined by socio-economic rather than geographic characteristics, or distance from centres of economic activity. Often they are affected by economic restructuring; the loss of a key industry and high unemployment. As such, unlike true geographic specificities they are mutable or transient, rather than permanent.

Generally speaking the Geospecs report illustrates the risk associated with abandoning spatial (in)accessibility as a defining feature for inner peripheries: It becomes difficult to distinguish inner peripheries from any other kind of lagging rural or semi-rural area.

^b http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/communications/2011/territorial-agenda-of-the-european-union-2020 [accessed 6th April 2016]

In commissioning this project the ESPON 2020 programme recognises and avoids this pitfall by drawing on a growing body of work relating to access to Services of General Interest (SGI). This is more than a question of choice of indicators – it shifts the concept of inner peripheries away from the concept of “economic potential” and towards the quality of life, or well-being of rural inhabitants. This in turn links them to demographic issues, such as rural-urban migration, and ageing. It also resonates with the impacts of austerity on service provision, and the longer-term effects of new public management, universal service obligations and “territorial equivalence”. This seems to suggest that the concept of inner peripheries which is emerging is not simply a Central European analogue of the kind of “economic potential” peripherality observed in Northern and Western Europe, but rather one which has more in common with the discourses on social exclusion and well-being.

The Italian policy initiative to support “Inner Areas”^{32,33} has much in common with the concept implied by the recent ESPON project call. The so called “aree interne” (internal, inner or interior areas) are conceived as rural areas subject to strong centrifugal forces - demographic decline, migration, abandonment of use and management of land, natural hazards, isolation, low accessibility to services and infrastructure, economic marginalization. These render the inner areas less able to sustain place-based development processes capitalising on local territorial capital in order to enhance their competitiveness. They can be viewed as a special type of inner periphery. Here too, the primary definitional indicators relate to access to Services of General Interest. However an additional source of terminological confusion arises between the Anglophone research tradition, which is used to the idea that the “periphery” is indeed around the (Northern and Western) edges of the country, and that of the Mediterranean and Iberian countries, where major cities are located on the coast, and peripherality is associated with “the interior”, or “inner areas”.

When Austria acceded in 1995 demographic and economic development vulnerabilities in mountain areas (which are inner peripheries “in all but name”) could not be addressed by Objective 6, but resulted instead in designation under Objective 5b. Later on support was continued through a very active participation in LEADER, together with national regional policy interventions tailored to the challenges of these areas³⁴.

3 Primary Peripheralization and Secondary Marginalization Processes

It is not the intention here to offer a single and exclusive definition of inner peripheries. Rather the goal is to identify the key processes which drive the evolution of Inner Peripheries. Arguable the distinguishing characteristic of an inner periphery is that its potential for development, or its quality of life, is being adversely affected by poor connectivity of some kind. This may be due to its location within “Euclidean space” (as in the Economic Potential models), or to poor access to services, or it may be due to aspects of “organised proximity”, through which it is excluded from mainstream economic activity, and unable to derive benefits from globalisation. Thus peripherality may be both spatial or aspatial⁷, and is often a mixture of both, but the defining feature, the driver, is the weakness of interaction, the lack of connectedness, rather than the resulting lagging socio- economic development. Thus all inner peripheries tend to be lagging behind in socio-economic development, but not all lagging areas are inner peripheries.

Our review of the academic and policy literature above leads us to conclude that there are broadly speaking three sets of conditions which result in inner peripherality:

1. Being an “enclave” of low accessibility to centres of economic activity (economic potential), surrounded by areas which are more accessible. In other words these are simply localities which have relatively high levels of conventional peripherality, but which are not “on the edge” of Europe.
2. Having poor access to services of general interest, whether this is a consequence of geographic remoteness, or to changing service delivery technologies, or to austerity, or other changes in provision such as privatisation.
3. An absence of “relational proximity”, and exclusion from “the mainstream” of economic activity, due to low levels of interaction with the wider world. These are social and institutional characteristics, of individuals, groups, firms, or organisations, rather than geographic features. They are often associated with disconnection from the centres of political power, and a lack of influence in terms of governance. These conditions may affect even geographically accessible regions, and such marginalisation processes are sometimes termed “peripheralization”.

These three conditions may be described as the *primary processes* which are responsible for the development of Inner Peripheries. This does not imply that they lead to three discrete types of inner periphery. In reality most areas which can be identified as Inner Peripheries seem to be affected by combinations of at least two of the primary processes described above. Furthermore, in most of them the primary processes of peripheralization are associated with a range of *secondary marginalisation processes*. These are different from the primary peripheralization processes in that they are not driven by distance from centres of economic activity, poor connectedness, or lack of interaction, and they can occur anywhere,

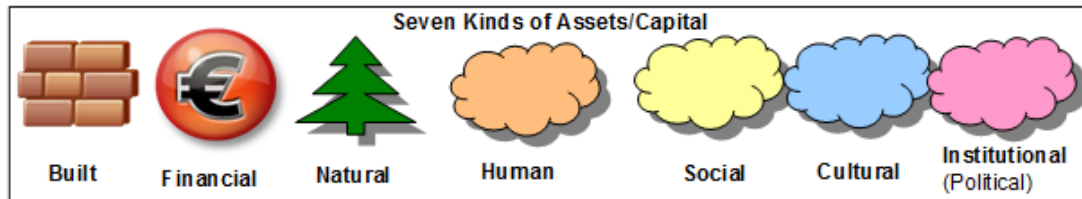
not just in Inner Periphery contexts. Thus most Inner Peripheries can be conceived as complex hybrid phenomena, in which one or more of the primary processes acts as a driver, but a range of secondary marginalisation processes exacerbate the situation.

The three primary processes and commonly associated secondary marginalisation processes are presented in the form of three “descriptive models” in Section 5 of the main report.

4 Inner Peripheries and Territorial Capital

The development of appropriate strategies for Inner Peripheries can be further supported by an enhanced perspective of territorial capital. Here we use the ESPON EDORA project final report³⁵ as a starting point. Assets Based Community Development, (ABCD)³⁶, is an approach which seeks to realise the full potential of a locality, by utilising all forms of capital (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Seven kinds of territorial capital³⁷



The seven forms of capital used in these asset based approaches to rural community development can be differentiated according to a theoretical taxonomy by Camagni³⁸. This classifies all potential sources of territorial capital in a three-by-three matrix, building upon the two dimensions of rivalry and materiality (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2: The innovative cross of territorial capital³⁷

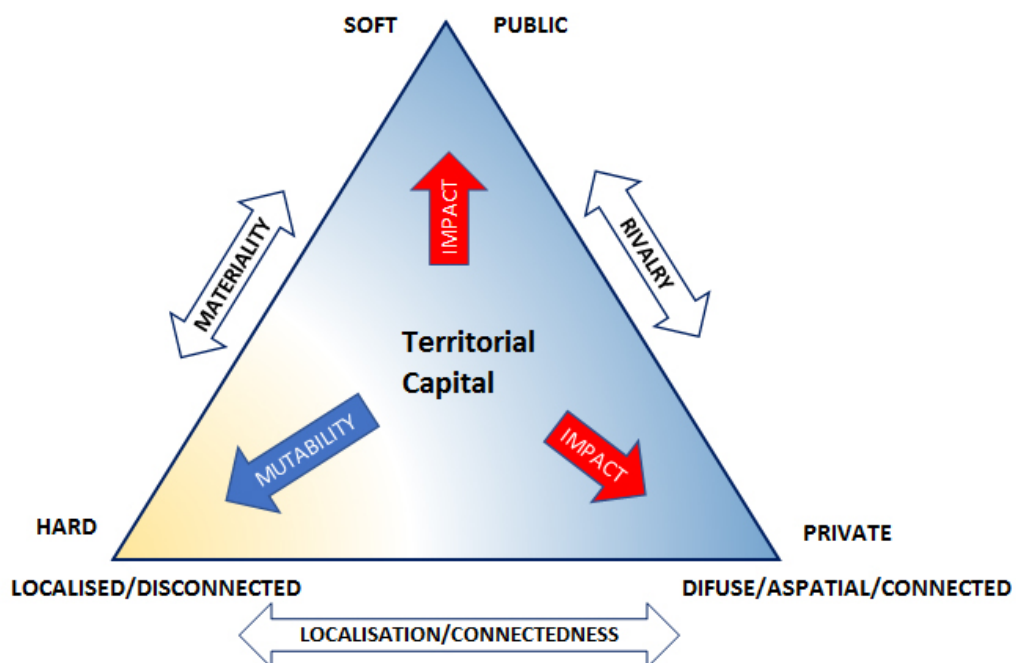
Rivalry	High rivalry (private goods)	c) Private fixed capital and toll goods	i) Relational private services	f) Human capital
	(club goods)	b) Intermediate, mixed-rivalry tangible goods	h) Cooperation networks	e) Relational capital
	(impure public goods)			
	(public goods)	a) Public goods and resources	g) Agglomeration economies, connectivity and receptivity	d) Social capital
	Low rivalry			
		Tangible goods (hard)	Mixed goods (hard + soft)	Intangible goods (soft)
		Materiality		

The value of such a typology of territorial capital is that it draws attention to the full range of assets which play a role in local and regional development. This is beneficial since it is

increasingly recognised that some “softer”, and therefore more difficult to measure, forms of capital have been neglected by policy. It is to be hoped that drawing attention to them will result in innovative new forms of intervention, with greater capacity to tackle complex forms of marginalisation.

We suggest that in the context of Inner Peripheries a third axis of differentiation could be extremely helpful. This third axis could be labelled “localisation/connectedness” (Figure 4.3). It is intended to differentiate elements of territorial capital along a scale from those which are localised and disconnected, to those which are diffuse, aspatial or highly connected. Some examples are shown in Figure 4.3. Thus regional transport infrastructure (i.e local roads and commuter lines) is a hard form of territorial capital, which is localised and fixed. On the other hand business networks, i.e. the private transaction networks of individual firms could be placed anywhere along the horizontal axis, from localised and disconnected on the left, to highly connected on the right (as in Figure 4.2). Territorial governance is very much a soft form of capital, and again, it could potentially be placed anywhere along the localisation/connectedness axis.

Figure 4.3: An enhanced typology of Territorial Capital

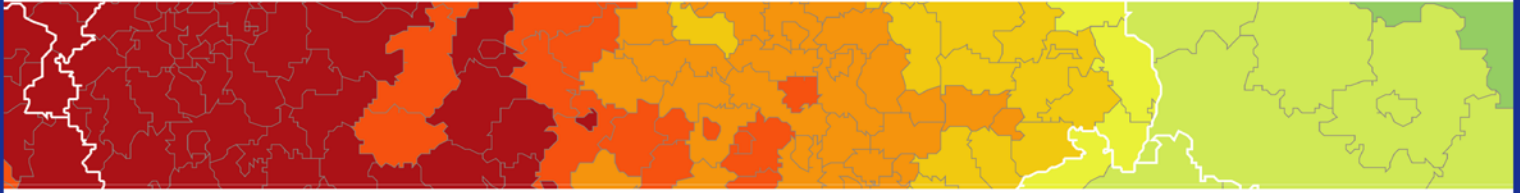


We believe that this classification of territorial capital has some value as a heuristic device for policy makers considering how to tackle peripheralization in their region or locality, by prompting them to assess and consider the extent to which elements of territorial capital need to be shifted to the right, i.e to become more connected and interactive.

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ESPON 2020 – More information

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