

# **Strategic Spatial Planning and the Promotion of Territorial Cohesion.**

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# Overview

- What challenge is posed for strategic spatial planning by the promotion of territorial cohesion?
- What can strategic spatial planning practices offer in the achievement of greater territorial cohesion?
- What are the key issues and dilemmas that need to be debated?
- Conclusions – what role for the EU?

# 1. The Challenge of Territorial Cohesion

*The Territorial Agenda of the EU was adopted in May 2007 by the EU Member States to strive for territorial cohesion:*

- Seeks to promote a **holistic and place-based** approach through which it should help achieving the objectives of the Lisbon-Gothenburg Agendas.
- Seeks to promote **balanced development** and give expression to a European spatiality.
- Proposes that EU sector policies that have **spatial impacts** need to consider territorial cohesion.
- Intends to enhance the influence on EU sector policy and to promote **regional identities**.
- Provides an opportunity for better horizontal and vertical **co-ordination** between different policy sectors.

*Has this opened the door to a more comprehensive spatial development policy?*

## *The challenges for spatial development:*

- Promotion of **cities and urban areas** as motors of Europe's development.
- Strengthening **urban-rural partnerships** for balanced development.
- Promotion of trans-national **research, business and regional development**.
- Strengthening trans-European **networks**.
- Promotion of trans-European technological and natural **risk management**.
- Strengthening trans-European **ecosystems and cultural resources** and heritage.

## 2. The scope and purpose of strategic spatial planning: a perspective.

**Intervention** – a purposeful activity.

**Future looking** – about time and change.

**Holistic** – integration of outcomes from economic, social and environmental processes.

**Creates places and spaces** – grounded in the built and physical form.

**Legitimate** – embedded in democracy and governance.

**Value based** – pursues normative and desired outcomes.

### 3. Some Key Issues and Dilemmas

- Diversity of territorial capital and resources
- Scaling of functionality and spatiality – FUAs, PUD, mega-regions
- Construction and use of evidence
- Resolution of sector trade-offs
- Multi-level governance and accountability
- Variety in systems, structures and instruments

# *The challenge of distributive outcomes and EU wide spatial justice*

- From a public welfare perspective, the key consideration is the optimal use of public funds to the greatest possible benefit of all populations in the affected regions.
- However, regional interests may collide with national interests.
- A national priority might not typically be based on the specific needs of the regions, but rather more general national objectives.
- This could be even more true at a pan-European level.

## 4. Concluding comments on the EU

- Expressions of visions and values –  
*eg. National Strategic Reference Frameworks & Regional Operational Programmes; State Aid Rules; Water, Birds, Habitats Directives.*
- Common evidence base for interventions –  
*eg. ESPON; Urban Audit; SEA; TIA*
- Governance structures and processes –  
*eg. European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC); regions for economic change; cross-border co-operation areas; transnational co-operation areas.*