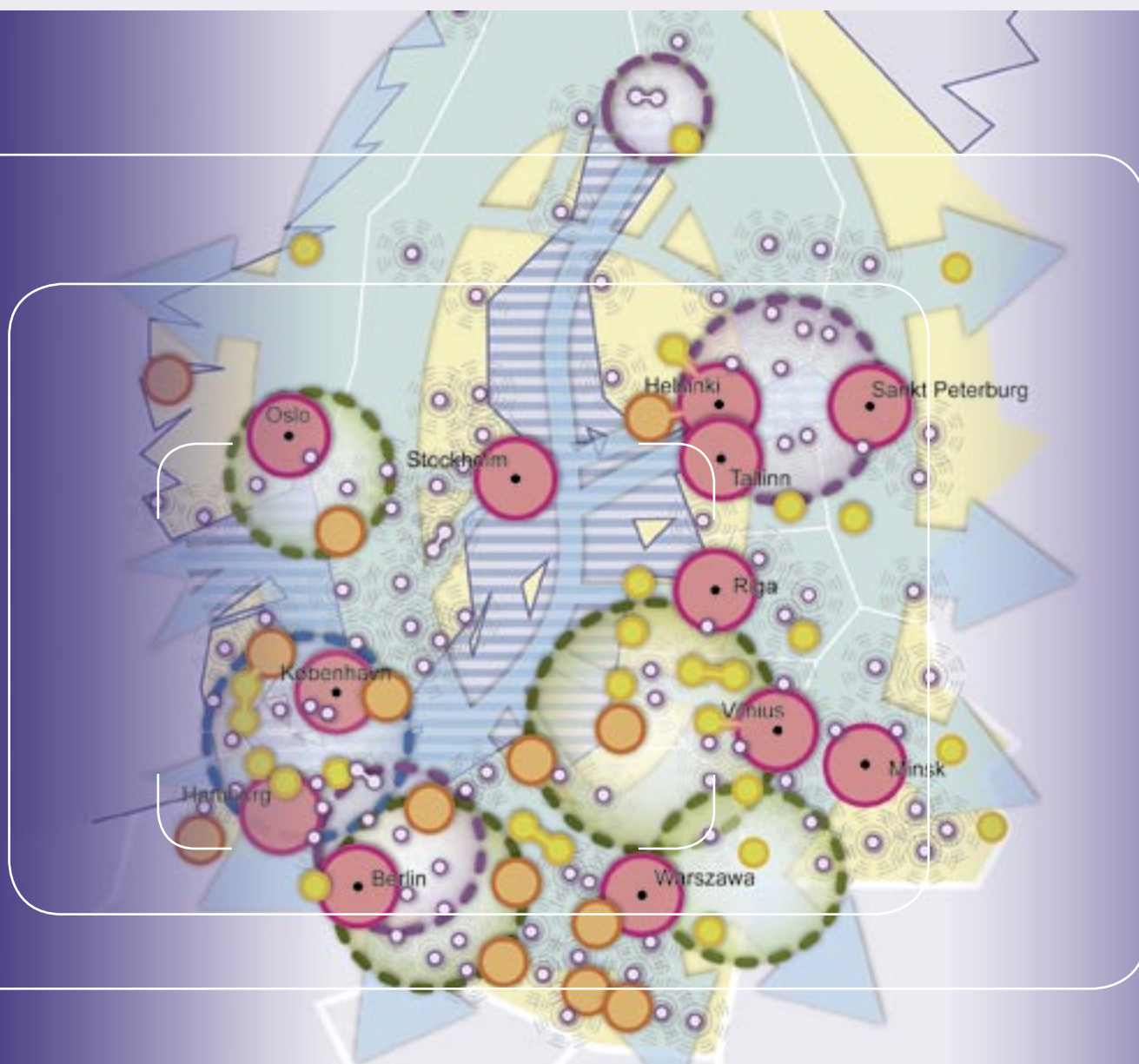


# PERSPECTIVES



## Territorial Cohesion - Baltic Sea Region examples Baltic contribution to the revised Territorial Agenda of the European Union



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## Introduction

### Dear Reader,

EcoRegion is an important project that supports the realisation of sustainable development approaches in the whole Baltic Sea Region and contributes to making it a sustainable and prosperous place.

In recent years, progress has been made to advance sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region. These efforts are now supported by the EcoRegion project, which seeks to turn this area into the world's first EcoRegion, where economical growth goes hand in hand with environmental integrity and social justice.

The project is based on the unique multi-stakeholder network of Baltic 21, which was created for the realisation of the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region. By way of eight sectoral platforms, Baltic 21 members carry out joint actions and cross-sectoral activities to pursue Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region. Furthermore the project is aligned with the Aalborg Commitments, through which regional governments voluntarily commit to defining clear targets and implementing concrete actions for Sustainable Development.

Through the EcoRegion project, ten model regions prepare strategic sustainability plans and implement a selected set of concrete measures designed to reach these Sustainable Development targets. This process is supported by a capacity building programme on Integrated Sustainability Management Systems. Numerous workshops foster the inter-regional, cross-sectoral and sectoral-regional dialogue and understanding on Sustainable Development within the Baltic Sea Region. In addition, public materials, including a good practices database, provide information on how to foster Sustainable Development on a regional level.

One of the publications produced by the project is the series EcoRegion Perspectives. It presents policies, projects and practices for the sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region from various perspectives such as tourism, spatial planning and climate change.

We hope this periodical will give readers an insight into the diversity and potential of sustainable development, and trust that you will find it both interesting and informative.

**Dörte Ratzmann,**  
**Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation**  
**and Nuclear Safety**

**EcoRegion Project Lead Partner**

## Dear Reader,

The growing importance of the concept of territorial cohesion stems from the acknowledgement of the fact that territory matters for development. It is not a mere coincidence that almost at the same time territorial cohesion became an official objective of the European Union and that the Nobel prize was awarded to Paul Krugman who brought space back into the contemporary debate of mainstream economics. A reason for that is, among others, the fact that in a globalized world more and more attention has to be paid to functional networks and to immobile endowments, which are decisive for regional competitiveness and the ability to cope with external shocks.

The concept of territorial cohesion is complex. It covers market driven development, institutional spheres and policy-making, in addition to value judgements of a normative nature. However, its core feature, the role of territorial organisation for well being at different geographical scales, has been recognized for a long time. In the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) the catalyst role has been played in this matter by VASAB since 1992. Also many local and regional governments have followed by starting to cooperate on territory relevant matters. Territorial issues have been placed high on the agenda of the HELCOM, the Union of the Baltic Cities or the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation and others. One of the flagship projects of the Council of the Baltic Sea States is the project on urban-rural relationships.

Although the concept of territorial cohesion seems to be a fresh one, the experience related to its practical use, at least in the BSR, is rather vast, and worth further promoting. BSR municipalities, regions and states have managed to accumulate relevant know-how on the formation of functional regions and networks, the creation of a critical mass for development through networking, and the integration of territorial assets into broader development policies. Experience in territorialisation of sectoral policies has also been encouraging.

The aim of this issue is to contribute to operationalization of the notion of territorial cohesion by examining different existing practices of its implementation so far in the BSR. But the ambition is also to encourage sectoral and territorial decision makers to think in spatial terms. The momentum is given by the ongoing work on updating the Territorial Agenda of the EU and on evaluation of the EU Strategy for the BSR. Both can hardly be accomplished without proper evidence from local, regional and national level.

**Jacek Zaucha**  
Editor

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## Origin of territorial cohesion



**Danuta Hübner**

Member of the European Parliament, Chairwoman of the Committee on Regional Development

Cohesion policy has contributed through its history to spreading growth and prosperity across the territory of the European Union. It has generated growth especially in the poorer regions. The recent 5th Cohesion Report says very clearly that without cohesion policy territorial disparities would be greater.

The Lisbon Treaty has added territorial dimension to the goals of economic and social cohesion. However, territorial cohesion is not a brand new objective. The concept was already implicit in the cohesion policy through the system of eligibility, the way the financial resources are distributed or the programming is organized. It is a fundamental objective of regional planning in the Union and provides the *raison d'être* for regional development policy. The Lisbon Treaty makes the territorial cohesion objective visible and explicit.

The process of territorialisation of cohesion policy began in the early 90s and led to the adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective in 1999, which aimed at developing a common framework

to guide national policies towards more balanced development. A number of ministerial meetings discussed territorial trends and their implications for policy-making. The debate culminated in the adoption of the Territorial Agenda and its Action Plan in 2007. The following year the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion launched a public debate with a view to coming to a better understanding of the concept of territorial cohesion and its policy implications in response to demands from the European Parliament and the ministerial meeting in Leipzig in 2007. The Commission received 391 responses, including contributions from all Member States, from nearly 100 regional authorities, from more than 150 regional and local associations as well as from cities, economic and social partners, civil society organisations, research institutions, and individual citizens. The European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, and the European Economic and Social Committee have all adopted their opinions on the Green Paper. The Commission summarized the key outcomes from the consultation in the sixth progress report on economic and social cohesion.

When preparing the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), Member States were supported by the European Commission but denied the European Union a competence in the matter. The process architecture of territorial cohesion policy resembled the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) which the White Paper on European Governance praised, but only as far as areas where there was no EU competence were concerned. After all, for as long as territorial cohesion was not a competence, voluntary cooperation as practiced in the ESDP process was the way. Presently, the Treaty of Lisbon identifies territorial cohesion as a competence shared between the Union and the Member States and it comes under Qualitative Majority Voting.

The end of the public consultation, however, does not mean the end of the debate. Territorial cohesion is part of a broader debate on the future, post 2013 design of the EU's regional policy. The future reform of EU regional policy should incorporate the conclusions of the debate on the Green Paper. Territorial cohesion should become a policy framework

for increased importance of the role of cities in the cohesion policy, for introduction of a functional geography approach, for macro-regional strategies and areas facing specific geopolitics and demographic challenges.

Territorial cohesion is a horizontal policy principle and, translated into legislative and policy proposals, should underpin all EU policies and actions.

Years of experience of European cohesion policy today allow the introduction of greater flexibility in organising cohesion policy programmes in order to better respond to territorial diversity. Geography can both intensify development problems as well as facilitate their overcoming. Territorial cohesion would therefore require more investment in territorial linkages. The current, 2007-2013 edition of cohesion policy provides a bridge towards territory-proof European policies allowing for full mobilisation of European development potential.



Informal Meeting of Housing and Urban Development Ministers © 2009 Danuta Hübner



Hearing of Johannes Hahn - Commissioner designated for Regional Policy © 2009 Danuta Hübner

## Territorial cohesion – there it is! And now?



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Spatial Foresight GmbH



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Territorial cohesion has been debated for almost one decade. After the ESDP (CSD 1999), it found its way into the Commission driven community strategic guidelines for Cohesion Policy (European Council 2006) as well as the member states driven Territorial Agenda (2007). After the consultation of the Commission's Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion (CEC 2008) it was settled in the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) and now belongs to declared objectives of European policies together with social and economic cohesion. Despite the formal status and the long debate in policy and science circles, the actual meaning still remains somewhat blurred. This became evident looking for example at the more than 300 reactions provided to the Commission's Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion (CEC 2008), to which the Commission has only given tentative feedback so far. It is obvious that the inherent complexity ranking around territorial cohesion does not ease the process from word to action. The complexity derives from the fact that a territorial approach takes by definition from a horizontal perspective a cross sectoral stand, from a vertical perspective a multi-level stand, and as a policy concept a spatially integrative stand. This makes it a challenge to develop the appropriate translation into concrete policies and public interventions. The 5th Cohesion Report published in November 2010 draws some basic lines on how to address territorial cohesion from the EU perspective but expectations of a clear-cut approach might not be met. In parallel, member states started their work on revising the Territo-

rial Agenda due to be agreed in May 2011. Complementarity is certainly imperative to best serve the purpose of a sustainable development of the European territory. Now the question is where to start and how to conclude for policy making.

### Territorial cohesion – a way of thinking in 5 principles

The policy developments have shown that there are strong reasons for territorial cohesion in order to ensure a strong and globally successful Europe in 2020 and beyond. Following the arguments for territorial cohesion, five key principles can be identified:

- **Recognize the territorial diversity.**

European territories have different assets and potentials. Every territory has its own distinct set of potentials for further development – its territorial capital or comparative advantage. At the same time, every region and local area also has resources available to make use of assets and balance deficiencies. The difference between the assets and deficiencies on the one side and the resources available to territories to activate potentials and to respond to deficiencies on the other, results in the fragility of a territory.

- **Identify potentials ...**

**... in relation to integrated development strategies.** Every territory faces different development dynamics.

The comparative advantages and distinct potentials of a territory often only become apparent in relation to an integrated strategy for the future – taking into account socio-economic and geographical specificities of an area. Purely sectoral



*The Lisbon Treaty presented by Lech Kaczyński, President of Poland*  
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development strategies often fail to identify and employ the territorial potentials and to cope with the territorial fragilities.

**... built on territorial specificities and characteristics as a base for a functional division of labour.** Based on tailor-made cross-sectoral (integrated) development strategies, the distinct features of a territory can be identified and related to the characteristics of other territories. This may permit a functional division of labour between territories and facilitate the type of territorial cooperation in which each territory contributes with its own strong characteristics.

- **Acknowledge the territorial context.**

Recognising the territorial context and its multifaceted dynamics is a key to success. This involves endogenous development potentials and fragilities, as well as exogenous factors such as the impact of developments in other territories and the

impacts of different sectoral policies at various levels of decision-making.

- **Ensure fair access to infrastructure and services.**

People and companies in all parts of the European Union need to have access to certain standards of services. The delivery of these can depend on the territorial context, i.e. the same service can be delivered by different means in different areas of the Union.

- **Refine governance processes.**

Local and regional stakeholders have a tacit knowledge of their territories, which is needed for the development of integrated strategies and the identification of territorial potentials and fragilities. But it is not only about knowledge. Appropriately refined governance arrangements are needed which are not limited to those stakeholders already interested and believing in territorial cohesion.

Getting territorial cohesion in motion

Following these five principles, the main source for the implementation is not the creation of an own territorial cohesion (sector) policy but the territorial coordination of sector policies and the multi-level coordination of policies (territorial governance). The need to maintain dialogue with other sectors to strengthen the territorial dimension in various policy fields remains a core issue. Greater emphasis on actual dialogue with the “non-believers” is needed. For this task, reference to the advances made the last twenty years should be used to convince remaining sceptics of both the importance and practicality of pressing on with the work on territorial cohesion. This relates to both the European and the national levels. Particular emphasis should be placed on those sectors which are closely related as well as the comprehensive EU 2020 strategy (CEC 2010). Moreover, the debate on the future of EU Cohesion Policy and its territorial dimension has started and provides an important opportunity for further dialogue. Thus far, the potential usefulness of Territorial Impact Assessments have been discussed but it may now be time to focus discussion more specifically on actual territorial impacts and to do so in relation to the relevant policy processes in various sectors. It is increasingly important to demonstrate the benefits and added value of the territorial dimension and territorial cohesion. Therefore, greater emphasis should be placed on delivery mechanisms and governance aspects

and less on further in-depth discussions on territorial developments. Furthermore, the exchange of experience on concrete implementation measures in the Member States could help to stimulate the application of the territorial cohesion principles not only at the EU level but also in the Member States. Concerning the EU level, a range of institutional arrangements is apparent in order to stimulate the cross-sectoral dimension of territorial cohesion. The starting point is usually the establishment of a so-called Interservice Group between Directorates Generals dealing with the mutual impact of policies. Furthermore the ex-ante impact assessment of the General Secretariat – which has to be elaborated for any formal initiative taken by the Commission – could take up the territorial dimension in addition to other assessment criteria. Furthermore, systematic monitoring of the territorial developments and in depth policy impact studies done by the ESPON are key for a well monitored territorial cohesion process.

*The article represents the authors' views and does not refer to any official position of the institution they are affiliated with.*

Future and perspectives on territorial cohesion in the European Union

Territorial cohesion as a key part of the EU Cohesion Policy

Article 3 of the Treaty of Lisbon, which entered into force on 1 December 2009, states among others that the European Union shall promote economic, social and territorial cohesion, and solidarity among Member States. The Treaty was adopted in order to provide the EU with modern institutions and optimised working methods to tackle both efficiently and effectively the challenges of today's world such as globalisation, climatic and demographic changes, security and energy. Therefore provisions of the article 3 can be interpreted as both high appreciation of the importance of the concept of territorial cohesion for addressing the above-mentioned challenges, and the increased role and significance of the Cohesion Policy as an integrative vehicle to support EU sustainable development. It also means that two traditional aspects of development, i.e. the social one and the economic one have been enriched by territorial considerations as the consequence of extending the notion of socio-economic cohesion to the territorial one. Thus, territorial cohesion has become a legitimate component and dimension of the EU Cohesion Policy. In effect, social, economic and territorial challenges shall be addressed on equal footing, which subsequently points to a need to integrate spatial and regional policies. As pointed out by Böhme and Eser (in this issue) this means among others that Cohesion reports will take into consideration the territorial dimension of develop-

ment and cohesion. However, in the long run reflections on the integration of spatial and regional policies at the EU, national and regional levels may necessitate the preparation of a new integrated European spatial development policy, which would replace the European Spatial Development Perspective (CSD 1999) endorsed eleven years ago (Szlachta, Zaucha 2010).

Main dimensions of territorial cohesion

Despite lively debate, an operational definition of territorial cohesion is still non-existent (e.g. Szlachta 2004, 4; ESPON 2004, 118) and there has been no uniform guideline on this notion (ESPON 2004 - glossary, p. 84). The Third Cohesion Report associates that notion with spatial integration and subregional cooperation (CEC 2004, 27). According to the Green Book (CEC 2008, 3), „territorial cohesion is about ensuring the harmonious development of all these places and about making sure that their citizens are able to make the most of inherent features of these

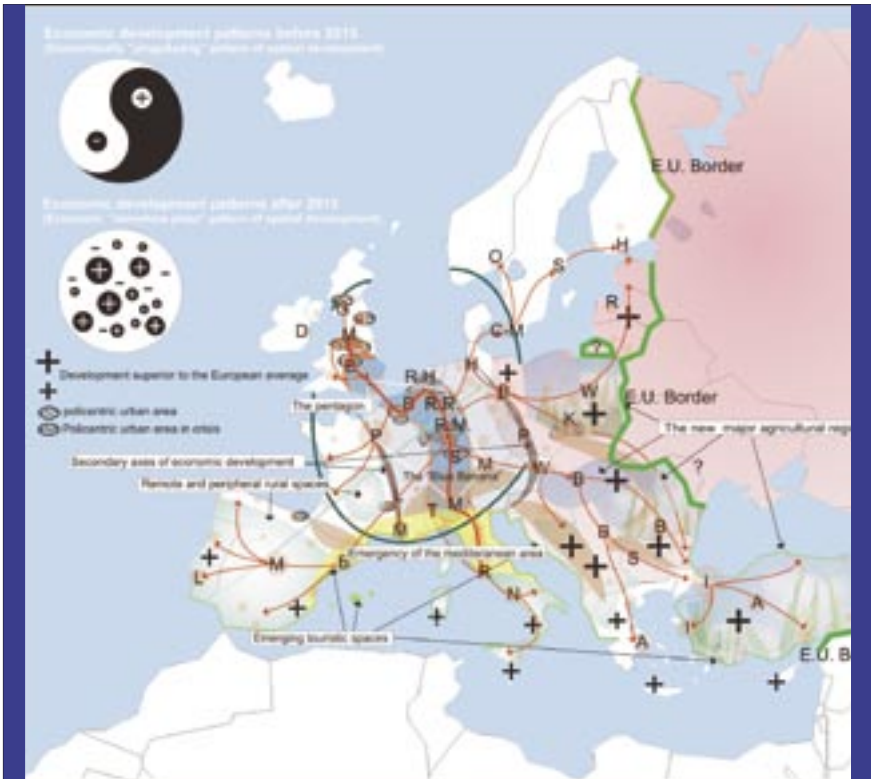


*The components of territorial cohesion, © ESPON project 3.3 Final Report Revised*



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Economy, technology and evolution of urban Europe © ESPON, project 3.2. Third Interim Report

territories. As such, it is a means of transforming diversity into an asset that contributes to sustainable development of the entire EU". In the Green Book four main dimensions of territorial cohesion are presented:

- Concentration, i.e. overcoming disparities in population density
- Connectivity (connections between territories), i.e. overcoming distance
- Co-operation (networking), i.e. overcoming developmental differences
- Territories with geographical handicaps, i.e. overcoming location barriers

Those four dimensions correspond to the five principles presented by Böhme and Eser (in this issue). So

far cohesion policy has concentrated on the implementation of territorial cohesion in the fields of accessibility and peripherality, whereas nowadays the opportunities of networking have started to be more frequently used and explored.

**Territorial cohesion in EUROPE 2020**

A low level of territorial cohesion means suboptimal use of developmental potentials of EU countries and regions as well as high transaction costs for EU economy and society. This will have a strong impact on the effectiveness of functioning at all geographic scales. Simultaneously, negative territorial phenomena occur such as „tunnel effects“, „backwash effects“, disparities in territorial standards of accessibility to public services of general interest, etc.

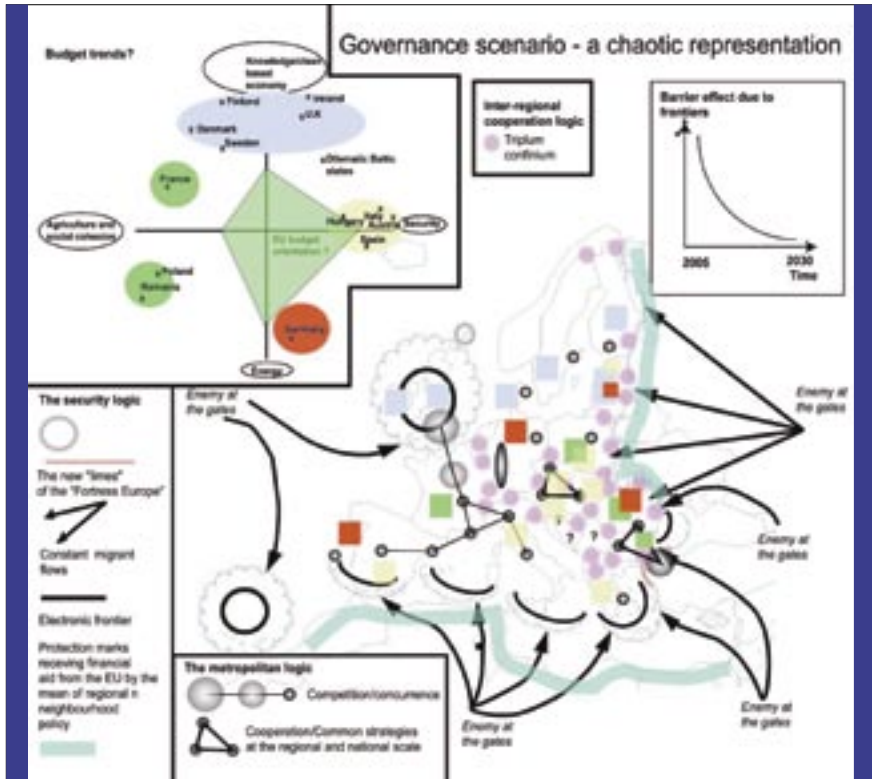
The newly adopted Strategy Europe 2020, which replaces the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies, is to give a frame for all EU policies including the cohesion one. Territorial cohesion was mentioned eleven times in this document, in particular under the priority of inclusive growth that will foster „a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion“ (CEC 2010, 8). One can also read “Economic, social and territorial cohesion will remain at the heart of the Europe 2020 strategy to ensure that all energies and capacities are mobilised and focused on the pursuit of the strategy’s priorities” (CEC 2010, 20). The Strategy also seeks to ensure that “the benefits of economic growth spread to all parts of the Union, including its outermost regions, thus strengthen-

ing territorial cohesion” (CEC 2010, 16). One of the flagship projects of the Strategy, „European platform against poverty“, will ensure social and territorial cohesion so that the benefits of growth and jobs are widely shared and people experiencing poverty and social exclusion are enabled to live in dignity and take an active part in society (CEC 2010, 17). All this means open opportunities to include territorial cohesion into a new generation of EU Policies after 2013.

**Key decisions ahead**

The work on shaping Cohesion Policy for the new programming period 2014-20 will be intensified in the nearest future. The ongoing debate – contributions of D. Hübner (2009), F. Barca (2009), P. Samecki (2009), Territorial Agenda of EU (2007) and Green Book on Territorial Cohesion (CEC 2008) – might lead to the conclusion that the future of territorial cohesion depends on the answers to the following questions:

- Will territorial cohesion guide allocation of structural funds and the cohesion fund in the new programming period?
- How and in which way are territorial aspects included in the system of new generation of EU objectives and initiatives under the Cohesion Policy?
- How do we want to eliminate and alleviate negative consequences of low territorial cohesion of the EU? What instruments should be used?
- How are the above-mentioned four dimensions of territorial cohesion conceptualized (so far the focus was mainly on territorial peripherality)?



Governance scenario – a chaotic representation © ESPON, project 3.2. Third Interim Report

The main condition for properly defining territorial cohesion priorities is the elaboration of a new generation of the European Spatial Development Perspective with a more than ten-year time horizon covering 27 member states. Without a radical increase in territorial cohesion a high rate of European socio-economic growth will be hardly possible.

## Territorial cohesion and its impact on sustainable development



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### Territorial dimension of sustainable development

With the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon in December 2009, territorial cohesion has become an official objective of the European Union (EU) that complements the longstanding objectives of economic and social cohesion and sustainable development. The objective of sustainable development is generally understood as achieving a balance between environmental, economic and social considerations. Sustainable development has been an official EU objective since 1997 and the first EU Sustainable Development Strategy (the 'Gothenburg agenda') was adopted in 2001 (European Council 2001). Together with the 'Lisbon agenda', which set the objective for the EU 'to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world' (European Council 2000: para 1.5), the Gothenburg agenda framed EU policy during the 2000s.

Territorial cohesion (TC) is sometimes described as the territorial dimension of sustainable development (Peyrony 2007), but the relationship between the two EU objectives will greatly depend on how territorial cohesion is defined in future EU policy. At present, several main discourses can be identified in relation to the meaning of TC (Waterhout 2007; Dühr et al. 2010). These discourses are promoted by different interests and have different possible implications for the future EU policy framework.

### Principal discussions on territorial cohesion

Currently one of the main issues discussed in relation to TC is the need to reduce regional disparities in the EU, especially through the Structural Funds. The focus is thus on cohesion and based on the underlying argument, as expressed in the 'European Spatial Development Perspective' (ESDP) (CSD 1999), that a more balanced (i.e. 'polycentric') development can help to counteract the damaging effects of concentrations of economic activity at European scale. Moreover, providing access to services of general interest, such as energy and postal services, in weaker and marginal regions of the EU would allow those citizens to stay in their territory and thus achieve 'spatial justice'.

A second discourse, rather than being aimed at redistribution, focuses on the global competitiveness of Europe. This discussion is based on the EU's Jobs and Growth agenda (European Council 2000; 2010) and places emphasis on the accessibility of cities and regions to be able to compete in the global economy, and on the development potential of individual regions. The focus is on all regions, not just those areas that are lagging behind, and the expectation is that all cities and regions would find individual ways to exploit their unique 'territorial capital' to contribute to increasing the EU's competitiveness.

Another discourse on TC places emphasis on achieving horizontal policy coordination by integrating the spatial impacts of EU sector policies.

This is a discussion that has been promoted in the 'Territorial Agenda of the EU' (2007), generally consid-

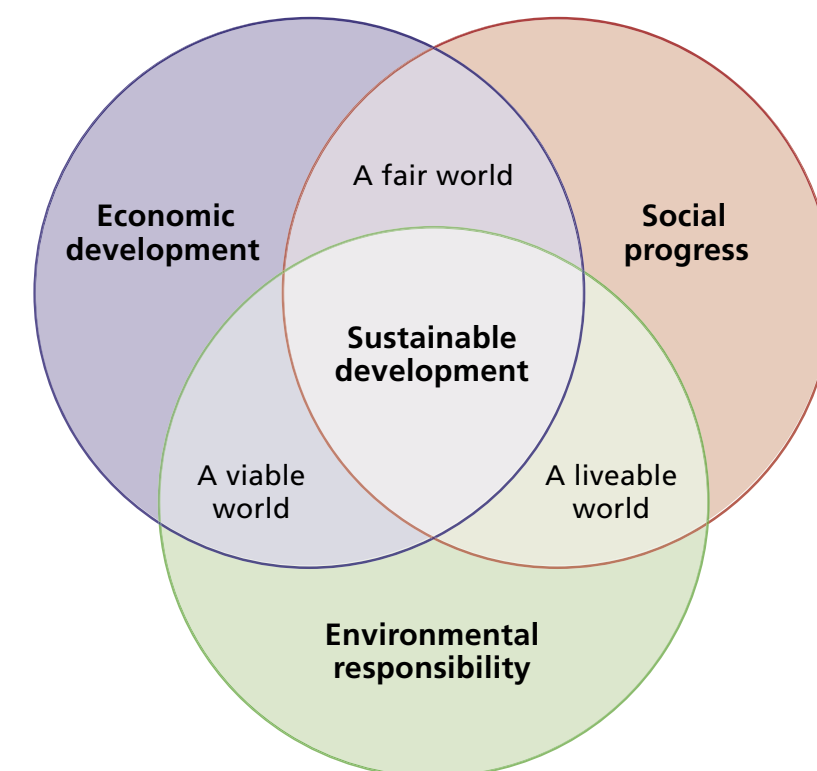
ered as the successor document of the ESDP, which places the spotlight on 'territorial governance'. Policy coordination is seen as a key concern for the entire EU, and the expectation is that it may be best achieved through spatial development frameworks at higher levels of scale, such as through the macro-regional strategies that are currently being piloted in the Baltic Sea Region and the Danube area.

Fourth, TC is also being interpreted in relation to sustainable development, which places the spotlight on sound environmental management but adds a strong territorial dimension to the longstanding objective of sustainable development. This debate is based on the EU's sustainable development strategy and driven by environmental interest groups, the European Environment Agency and 'green' member states (such as the Nordic countries) who are concerned that the current debate on TC focuses too strongly on economic and social aspects at the expense of environmental issues (EEA 2010). Coordination of EU policies with territorial impacts is also promoted in this debate, albeit from a sustainability perspective which would build on existing instruments such as sustainability appraisals.

### Integrated approach as a way out

Whichever of these discourses receives most support in the discussions over the future orientation of the EU policy framework will have implications for the relationship between TC and sustainable development. In the current economic and political climate the competitiveness discourse seems to further gain

in prominence (European Council 2010), and this may well come at the expense of the EU's objective of sustainable development. However, if it can be shown that better policy coordination can indeed be achieved and that this will have positive effects on economic performance, social cohesion and environmental protection, as the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion (CEC 2008) has argued, then this would present strong arguments for pursuing an integrated approach to sustainable territorial development and cohesion.



*Different components of sustainable development*



## The revised Territorial Agenda of the European Union



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The notion of territorial cohesion (TC) covers a prominent position in the Territorial Agenda of the European Union (2007) - a joint policy document of EU Member States to orient the development of the EU territory - and in the background report The Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union (2007) - TSP. These documents generated Europe-wide discussions on territorial cohesion, which then resulted in new fora (network of national TC contact points, interservice group, etc.) and innovative practical solutions at national and regional levels. Despite this, the notion of territorial cohesion remained vague, i.e. without a precise definition. This paper aims at presenting some of the results of the ongoing revision process of the Territorial Agenda (TA) related to territorial cohesion.

### Updating the Territorial Agenda

The revision of the TA and of the background report TSP started in 2009. It was commissioned to the VÁTI Nonprofit Ltd supported by a team of experts from Czech Republic, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Spain, Switzerland and Nordic countries. The final result, the approval of the new document, is expected in 2011 under Hungarian EU Presidency. The main reason for updating these documents is to be found in the recent, unprecedented EU enlargement, which led to territorial impacts that can only now be fully understood. Another reason is the growth of global competition leading to new patterns of territorial cooperation and increased socio-economic vulnerability of specific types of ter-

ritories. However, equally important is the change of status of TC itself. With the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) in 2009, territorial cohesion became a shared competence of the Member States, the EU Commission and the EU Parliament, which opened a new era for territorial thinking in Europe.

The analysis conducted for updating TSP shows that the challenges of territorial development have changed the understanding of territorial cohesion. The policy context has evolved, especially with reference to the recent approval of the EU2020 Strategy (CEC 2010). An urgent need has appeared to strengthen the "territoriality" of the EU2020 goals, to better include territorial thinking in sector policies as well as to point out messages for regional, sub-regional and cross-border territories. New implementation mechanisms for TC shall also be established in order to match with the new policy context.

### Towards a broader understanding of territorial cohesion

The revised Agenda provides a more ambitious framework for understanding territorial cohesion but refrains from giving its definition. In general terms, TC aims at improving the state of the EU via harmonious, efficient and sustainable territorial structures, where different territories (regions, cities, macro-regions) can realise an optimal long-term development path. This is in line with the Green Paper on TC (CEC 2008) referring to development of all types of places and making sure that the citizens of these places are able to make the most out of the inherent

features of territories. TC is a means of transforming diversity into an asset. The main justification for TC is its integrative and functional character.

In the updated TA (2011) the focus is both on solidarity (meaning a more harmonious state of Europe) as a key element of TC, and on interdependences, i.e. networking, cooperation and integration between various territories of the EU at all geographical scales. The document pinpoints that economy of flows should complement economy of places. Therefore TC covers: development of territorial capital, interactions between places and territorial management.

The updated TA is to become a territorial complement to the EU2020 Strategy (CEC 2010). Smart, sustainable and inclusive growth can only be achieved if the territorial dimension of EU2020 is respected. Smart growth means among others building on local potentials and assets and finding locally sustainable and unique development paths. Inclusive growth is related to convergence, (solidarity) and diffusion but also access to services of public interest. Therefore the place-based approach as introduced by Barca (2009) is an effective tool to contribute to TC at all geographic scales.

The territorial approach is also a key concept for harmonising different development paradigms such as sustainability, convergence (solidarity), and regional competitiveness. A right balance of economic, environmental and social needs should be found for each territory.

### Territorial cohesion - a backbone for territorial development

In the updated TA (2011) territorial cohesion is a backbone for all priorities:

- **Polycentric development** requires **functional regions** and networks of cities crossing administrative borders.
- **Partnership and cooperation between urban and rural territories** is in line with integrative aspects of TC.
- **Improving territorial connectivity**, i.e. accessibility of services of general interest, information, knowledge, and mobility are essential features of TC.
- **Activating territorial assets** is a core element of territorial cohesion as it promotes the use of local economies for improving EU global competitiveness.
- **Cross-border territorial integration** and formation of functional regions improves the use of development potentials (ecological systems, city networks, social ties etc.) in territories divided by borders.
- **Connecting ecological structures and diverse cultural networks** results in **functional integration** of natural and human environments.
- **Differentiating policies** with respect to the specificity of different territories is a key precondition for efficient governance as highlighted by the TC concept.



Preparation of the Revised Territorial Agenda: Drafting team meeting, VÁTI premises in Budapest. © VÁTI



Preparation of the Revised Territorial Agenda: Working group meeting, VÁTI premises in Budapest. © VÁTI



Preparation of the Revised Territorial Agenda:  
Working group meeting, VATI premises in Budapest.  
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Preparation of the Revised Territorial Agenda:  
Drafting team meeting, VATI premises in Budapest.  
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### Territorial cohesion as a shared competence

In the field of TC the European Union and the Member States may adopt legally binding acts (Art 4 & 174 TFEU<sup>1</sup>). This gives a stronger base for joint actions in pursuing TC, with respect to the subsidiarity principle. Policies of the Union have to pursue territorial cohesion, and Member States shall conduct and coordinate their economic policies to achieve TC (Art 175 TFEU).

The logical consequence is an even stronger focus on governance aspects. Territorial cohesion is understood as a permanent and cooperative process involving the various actors and stakeholders of territorial development at political, administrative and technical levels:

- TC is an integrative horizontal objective in decision-making at all territorial levels (TC can contribute to harmonisation of different policies and thereby increase their success).
- TC is the consequence of the intensification of “territorialisation” of Cohesion Policy and sectoral policies (EU Maritime Policy as a blue print).
- TC will be subject to an effective system of monitoring and progress evaluation, which is to be established on national and EU level.
- TC will play an increasing role in territorial cooperation programmes (former INTERREG).

When designing and running sector policies, territorial impacts, territorial differences and performance should be taken into consideration. Territorial approaches should be applied to optimize spatial impacts and territorial interplay of policies. Synergies between them should be supported by their coordination at each

territorial level. This should be facilitated by spatial analysis (e.g. territorial impact assessment), coordinated planning mechanisms and territorially sensitive monitoring systems.

Cohesion policy with its integrative and cross-sector nature is the main instrument to implement TC. However, there still is a need of strengthening spatial coordination, of improving the monitoring of territorial impacts and of creating integrated place-based programmes and projects.

A permanent methodological support and a comprehensive knowledge base are also a must. To this aim, the role of the ESPON Programme should be strengthened. There is also a need for an agreed set of indicators to monitor TC in sectoral contexts. These indicators shall be used i.e. for the regular reporting activities of the DGs and of the Member States. To achieve the above-mentioned ambitions, some kind of road map is necessary for guiding efforts of decision makers at EU, national and regional levels towards a more integrative territorial approach. This might be one of the tasks of the next Polish EU Presidency.

<sup>1</sup> Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0047:0199:EN:PDF>

## How the VASAB Long Term Perspective can contribute to territorial cohesion

### Territorial dimension of development

The inclusion of territorial cohesion in the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) has made the notion unavoidable for any actor involved in spatial planning across Europe. The most pressing issue for those actors is not IF territorial cohesion is a suitable driving force for European regional policy thinking, but rather HOW this notion can be put in practice and implemented so that it ‘delivers’ what it is aiming at: a more balanced, harmonious development of territories throughout Europe. In this sense, the territorial dimension should be the starting point for any discussion on social and economic cohesion, since any measure or incentive in this respect has a concrete territorial impact – and that differs if this particular measure or incentive is taken in peripheral, sparsely populated areas of Scandinavia or in one of the metropolitan areas within the Pentagon.

The days of the mainstream way of thinking about territorial development in the EU are over. Expectations that economic development taking place in metropolitan areas - thanks to agglomeration economies - will diffuse to other territories, have proved to be unduly. Many studies have shown that although convergence between states has occurred in the recent past, the disparities between, for instance, metropolitan areas and second-tier city-regions, as well as other types of territories, have simultaneously increased drastically.

A more territorial way of thinking is needed, which acknowledges the potential brought by the territorial diversity of the continent. In this framework, each European region should be encouraged and supported to take full advantage of the specific set of natural and institutional assets and human capital that should frame its development opportunities. In that respect, territorial cohesion can be understood as a conceptual framework to promote networks between and within regions, acknowledging the widespread interdependences of regions and places. In this sense it strives for improved networking, territorial cooperation and integration between different types of regions and places and their respective stakeholders across the EU.

A much more territorially sensitive perspective can also help to bridge sectoral boundaries, since the challenges of specific places are in the focus. This implies, on a policy level, an integrative package of very different measures, which generally incorporates more than one sector or, for instance, more than one ministry. Only in this sense it is possible to make better use of the existing territorial capital, i.e. the complex combination of assets that are available in the territory at hand (e.g. within a functional urban region), and in return to make sure that policies are tailor-made for existing challenges. Only in this way can the different starting points, configurations and specificities within and between Europe’s territories be taken into account.



**Peter Schmitt**

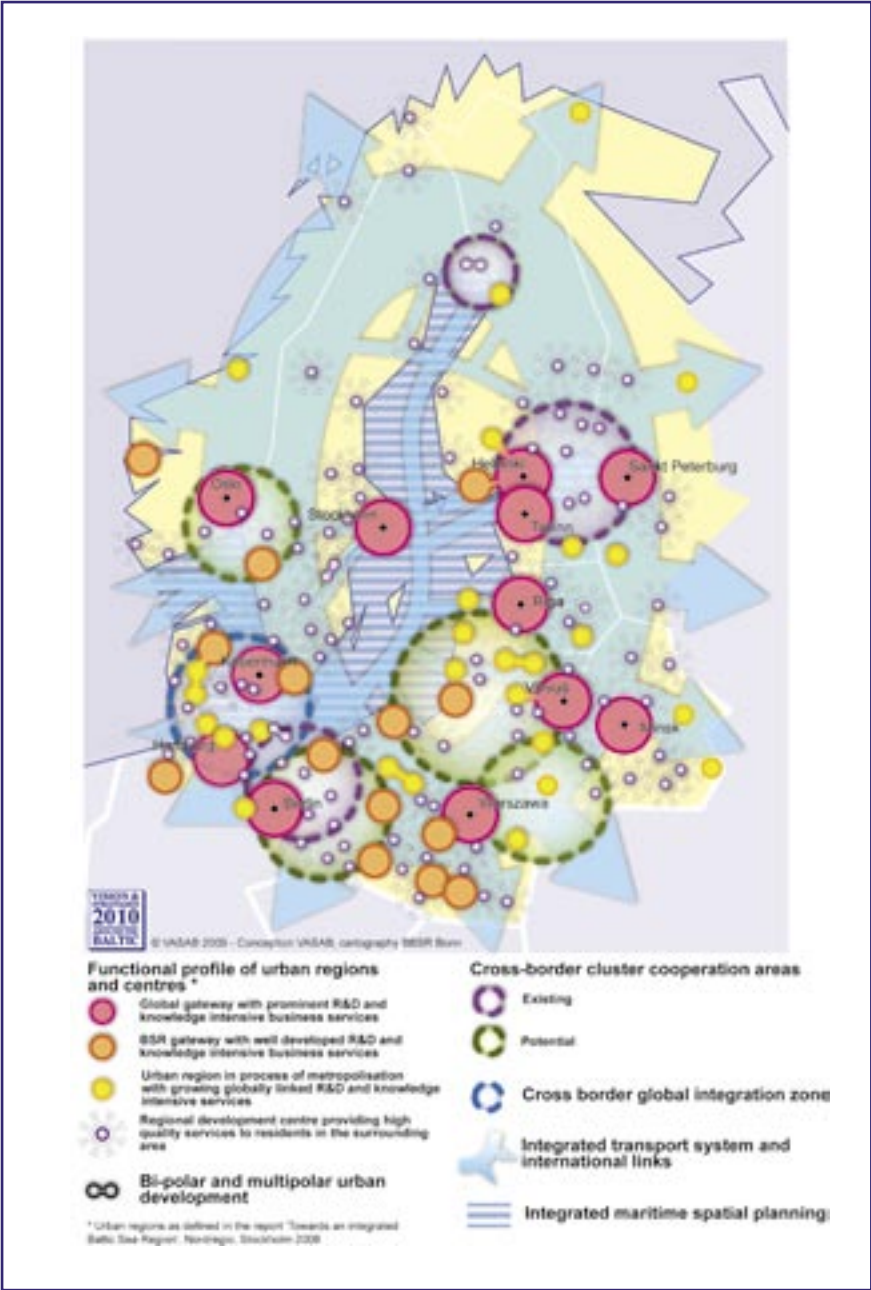
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2030: Territorial development perspective © VASAB 2009 – Conception VASAB, cartography BBSR Bonn

**VASAB Long-Term Perspective and EU Baltic Sea Strategy**

At the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) level, the VASAB (2009) Long-Term Perspective (LTP) can be seen as the archetypal framing document in this respect. VASAB stands for Visions and Strategies around the Baltic Sea and is an intergovernmental network, founded in 1992 to promote cooperation on spatial planning among BSR countries, both EU and non-EU members (such as Norway, Belarus and North-West Russia).

The LTP depicts some of the major challenges of this macro-region from such a territorial perspective. The EU Baltic Sea Strategy (CEC 2009) on the contrary, gives almost no indications in what kind of territory the proposed projects and actions might have the strongest impact to fulfill the EU's strive for social and economic cohesion. It seems that the BSR is a homogenous place, without any territorial diversity at all. The VASAB LTP is instead very concerned about the growing disparities and thus about the incapacity so far to turn territorial diversity into strength, as asserted by the EU Commission's Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion. In this sense, the VASAB LTP is an appropriate complement to the EU Baltic Sea Strategy, at least in light of a number of proposed projects and actions, as it highlights types of territories with urgent needs and where those incentives might have the greatest impact. It also includes a synthesis document on spatial trends in the BSR, which should – at least potentially – strengthen its weight due to the ongoing need for 'evidence'-based policies. In this respect

it shall provide the ground for monitoring and evaluation of territorial development processes in the BSR.

**Action Agenda for the Baltic Sea Region**

The VASAB LTP does also propose a number of 'own' projects and actions. Since it is a transnational strategic spatial planning document, adopted by the national ministers responsible for spatial planning in 2009, with a perspective for the BSR, it can only unfold communicative power. The document can help to raise awareness about certain issues, initiate and channel discourses and finally support the prioritising of political options. It focuses on coordinating existing programmes, agendas, and instruments, and aims at developing a better functional division of labour among existing stakeholders. The LTP has to deal with a complex transnational architecture of institutions consisting of several state governments (at the national, regional and local level) as well as numerous other organisations – such as around 40 currently active pan-Baltic Organisations. In this light it is very eye-catching that all actions of transnational impact have to be negotiated among a bunch of different stakeholders with different interests and agendas.

Having said this, it becomes obvious that the ambitious goals that are pinpointed in the VASAB LTP can only be achieved if the network uses its communicative power in the most efficient way. Due to limitations of the VASAB network, such as a rather low budget and a limited organisational capacity, the success of the

LTP depends on how far VASAB is able to mobilise advocates and allies in order to frame discourses and to convince further stakeholders. Also one should not forget that 'spatial planning' is as such of coordinative nature, which means that it has very often no own powerful financial resources and thus a low standing in politics. It is also very differently defined across the BSR, with different tasks and administrative cultures.

The VASAB LTP sets out 'the BSR's territorial cohesion perspective of joint efforts of countries and organisations for the year 2030'.

In all, 22 actions are addressed:

- Urban networking and urban-rural relations (9 actions)
- Accessibility issues (10 actions)
- Maritime spatial planning and management (3 actions)

This 'action agenda', identified through a collaboration process between BSR stakeholders on the basis of analytical evidence, does not only propose a set of concrete actions to solve a persisting development issue in the BSR, and thus to promote territorial cohesion, but also pinpoints main actors, instruments and leverages that have the capacity to 'deliver' these actions. It remains to be seen how far (or if at all) the proposed actions will be implemented in the near future and what their factual territorial impacts are. What is certain at least is the fact that they comprise an ambitious agenda towards territorial cohesion 'within' the BSR.



## Aspects of territorial cohesion in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region



**Joanna Held**  
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### The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Discussions on the notion of territorial cohesion (TC) in the EU gained significance with the publication of the Green Book on TC (CEC 2008). This opened the gate for strengthening the long-lasting informal intergovernmental cooperation of Member States (MS), which should result in common actions and tangible decisions towards making the notion of TC operational in the EU.

As a pilot initiative of the macro-regional strategy concept, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) prepared by the European Commission (CEC 2009) is, to some extent, being perceived as the sort of process that could lead towards such operationalisation. Although the region has widely developed international and inter-regional communication and cooperation, it seems that full advantage of the EU membership opportunities is not taken and that the challenges occurring in the region have not yet quite been addressed. On one hand the Baltic Sea Region is highly heterogeneous in economic, environmental and cultural terms, whereas on the other hand it shares many common resources and presents significant interdependence (CEC 2009). The Strategy focuses on four main priorities - sustainable environment, prosperity, accessibility and attractiveness, and safety and security - with the aim of strengthening these thematic aspects in the BSR territory (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Sweden, with soft involvement from Russia, Belarus and Norway).

### Territorial cohesion in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

The EU Affairs Ministerial Conference in September 2009 concluded that the macro-regional approach should not be the only instrument for TC, even though there are significant synergies between the two concepts. Both relate to place-basedness, inclusiveness, integrated development and implementation on multi-level basis.

The definition of macro-regions developed during the process of programming the EUSBSR, describes a macro-region as “an area including territory from a number of different countries or regions associated with one or more common features or challenges (Zauch 2010).” In that context there is a question of whether the process of diagnosis of the EUSBSR was conducted thoroughly enough and whether it took into consideration all necessary specificities of social, economic and territorial development of particular parts of the macro-region concerned.

The added value of a macro-regional approach towards TC is reflected in:

- territorial starting point – an EU policy development process,
- stakeholder process and multi-level governance ambitions,
- commitment from national and regional levels,
- coordinated use of EU funding and structured cooperation with international financing institutions,
- transnational work methods in i.e. innovation and clustering, infrastructure, land and maritime spatial planning.



EU Commission presents the Baltic Sea Strategy to Regional Offices, Brussels 25th June 2009 © 2009 Danuta Hübner

However, when analyzing EUSBSR it is clear that the territorial approach should be strengthened, as the document appears to a great extent to be a solely thematic anthology of planned activities, where the TC criterion and possible territorial impacts are not that clearly visible. In other words, EUSBSR should be seen as an instrument for deepening social, economic and also territorial cohesion by achieving macro-regional aims based on the diagnosis of common development challenges but also on territorial and local conditions in certain Baltic States or their regions. In particular, the Priority Areas implemented in cooperation with other MS may effectively contribute to reaching such aims through exchange of know-how, experience and good practices. In

that sense, EUSBSR is a valuable initiative as it strengthens multilateral cooperation between MS of certain territories in order to raise the level of competitiveness and services in specified areas. Another aspect is that the process of achieving TC should be implemented at all levels: European, national, regional and local. The EUSBSR in theory provides such a mechanism of institutional cooperation at all these levels: The High Level Group (HLG) at the EU level consisting of representatives of National Coordinators, intergovernmental cooperation between Priority Areas Coordinators, and finally cooperation at the national level between relevant actors such as Flagship Project Leaders and relevant Ministries. However, in practice rela-



Commissioner Ms Hübner presents the Baltic Sea Region Strategy at the Press Conference, Brussels 10th June 2010 © 2009 Danuta Hübner

tions between these actors are quite complicated and communication channels are not that transparent, mostly due to the three layers of coordinators and international cooperation required at each cooperation level. There is a need for greater stimulation between those stakeholders towards closer cooperation and regular working level dialogue on each of the parties' roles, tasks and progress. The role of the HLG, which is functional since spring 2010 should be more visible, with a more decisive and operational role. Additionally, a targeted forum should be created to conduct the improvement process of the implementation system, meaning effective coordination, monitoring, reporting, evaluation and upgrading of the process quality. The implementation of common activities should be based on an integrated approach, i.e. coordinated and complementary actions on the economic and social spheres, taking into consideration all EU and national community policies having territo-

rial impact (transport policy, energy policy, innovation, etc.). Therefore, functional and networking relations between them must be provided. Involvement of such a wide spectrum of policies will not only provide a comprehensive approach but will also offer a wider range of financing sources. Although interservice cooperation between relevant DGs in EC seems to be improving, it still needs to be strengthened. MS efforts also need to be strengthened towards involvement of national and regional level partners from various institutions, to work in an integrated manner to combine sectoral policies adequate for the EUSBSR thematic areas. Most of the involvement comes from Ministries involved in Structural Funds implementation. Not much is coming from those, which could also contribute with their national competences and resources. In order to widen the scope of possibilities to implement multi-country projects of transnational character, the use of art. 37.6 b of the General Regulation, which is extensively being promoted by EC as relevant for Strategy implementation, could have been further developed in the form of more precise guidelines or detailed interpretation. One of the important challenges related to operationalising the process of TC is the agreement on a set of indicators at EU level. These should allow for: specifying the endogenous potential of particular territories to be developed, measuring the territorial impact of EU policies and, setting the final targets for indicators for achieving TC. Such indicators should be of static (accessibility, demography, sustainable development) and

of dynamic (transfers and flows of all assets in the territory) character. Due to the everlasting difficulties in providing reliable and unified data at a certain level of territory, ESPON experiences must be used to greater extent in that context.

Conclusions

Summing up the above analysis, the focus of TC should be on:

- improvement of cohesion and coordination of interventions within various policies by addressing the territory as a starting point,
- integrated development, supporting a more effective definition of the policies' objectives and directions for relevant instruments,
- shifting from sectoral thinking towards task oriented thinking,
- promotion of cooperation and creation of networks between regions and cities.

Macro-regional strategies may be seen as a tool for promoting the territorial dimension of EU policies and increased TC but they should certainly not be perceived as the only tool for that aim. It may be supposed that the concept of macro-regional development will influence the shape of regional policy and Cohesion Policy after 2013. Welcomed outcomes would be: raising the effectiveness of European territorial cooperation and providing for the solid coordination between EU policies as well as between EU and national policies having territorial impact. However, in order to treat the EUSBSR and the subsequent ones as success stories, enriching the notion of TC, it seems that a more comprehensive and clear management system should be provided. Otherwise



substantial doubts might occur in matters of responsibility and sense of ownership among MS. Consequently the concept of a macro-regional strategy that introduces added value towards strengthening territorial cohesion and cooperation will simply not have a solid basis or could even fade away. Efficient networking between stakeholders is indispensable to determine which wise system of communication channels should be designed.

Participation of countries in the implementation of the EU BSR Strategy © Jarosław Czochanski University of Gdańsk



Territorial cohesion: a force for sustainable urban and rural development



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In the EU Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion (CEC 2008) it is clearly articulated that territorial cohesion is about ensuring harmonious territorial development and making sure that citizens are able to make the best use of the inherent features of the territory that they are living in and this should be done in a coordinated and sustainable way. Hence, sustainable development is at the heart of policy design when it comes to territorial cohesion policy by building new bridges between economic effectiveness, social justice and ecological balance. It builds upon seeking effective and integrated solutions across territories and sectors and requires an open and transparent dialogue between various authorities and stakeholders.

The Baltic Sea Region has had a steadfast commitment to sustainability and it has produced a strong track record when it comes to sustainable development in both prin-

ciple and practice. However, still today there are many remaining and new challenges to sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region, as there are throughout the world. Some of the greatest challenges are linked to territorial cohesion, such as the need to foster greater linkages between urban and rural areas.

**Inherent Baltic Sea Region features**  
Some of the unique inherent features of the Baltic Sea Region are that a majority of people in the Region lives in small and medium sized cities and towns, or in rural areas in close proximity to towns. Only a handful of larger metropolitan areas exist in our region. The Baltic Sea Region is also characterized by vast remote areas, which lie mainly in the North. The Baltic Sea Region comprises all three “types of regions with specific geographical features facing particular development challenges”, as highlighted in the EU Green Paper (CEC 2008).



New CBSS Secretariat premises in Stockholm © CBSS Secretariat

Both cities and urban regions are the drivers of economic development and prosperity. Cities are the transport hubs that link the entire region together and provide the services that keep the places still attractive for people to live in and visit. The interactions between cities and surrounding rural areas can be mutually supportive if there are positive partnerships that can capture the full benefits for both urban and rural areas. Farming and forestry remain crucial in the rural areas and sustainable tourism can be seen as a potential growth area providing a platform for economic diversification in rural communities. It is also facing negative external effects from the general strong urbanization trend and other demographic changes endangering the balanced and harmonious development of the region.

Sustainable urban and rural development

The Expert Group on Sustainable Development of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) - Baltic 21 has recently developed a Strategy to tackle some of the territorial cohesion challenges. Sustainable urban and rural development is identified as a strategic area for cooperation over the next five years. An ambitious goal has been set with clear objectives. *The Baltic Sea Region should become a region of sustainable cities and towns in symbiosis with vibrant rural areas. This will be done by improving the quality of life in both urban and rural settings. Moreover, actions have been called for to promote better management of urban-rural interactions, support initiatives on integrated management of natural resources, and to develop strategies for sustainable tourism.*



Vansu Bridge over River Daugava, Riga © CBSS Secretariat



Talis Linkaits  
Head of Secretariat Vision and Strategies  
around the Baltic Sea  
VASAB 2010



Sakari Saarinen  
Project Coordinator  
Environment and Sustainable Development  
Secretariat  
Union of the Baltic Cities





City of Turku © City of Turku

The goal and the objectives will be carried out in close cooperation with the members from the 11 Baltic Sea States, the European Commission, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations, academic and financial institutions as well as local, city and sector networks. Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010 (VASAB) and Union of Baltic Cities (UBC) Commission on Environment are strategically important partners in this regard. This is because these organisations have a common and shared interest in urban-rural partnerships and strengthening quality of life in the Baltic Sea Region. These issues have been stressed also through both VASAB's 7th Ministerial Conference in October 2009 endorsement of the new Long Term Perspective (VASAB 2009) and UBC's Sustainability Action Programme adopted last year in September (UBC 2009).

A concrete and tangible cooperation to strengthen the quality of life through improved management of urban rural interactions is currently being undertaken by the partners in the NEW BRIDGES project funded by the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013<sup>1</sup>. This project led by UBC Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat has been awarded the Baltic 21 Lighthouse Project status. Municipalities and sub-regions have an important role in promoting the quality of life of the people living in the Baltic Sea Region. Lots of different interactions and partnerships between urban, suburban and rural areas exist which call for better management. In the NEW BRIDGES project, new partnerships and sustainable solutions are targeted by paying particular attention to the individual preferences of the people living and working in the regions involved in the project. As a



VASAB Expert Workshop „Urban-Rural Partnerships in the Baltic Sea Region“ ©VASAB 2010

project result there will be improved management of urban-rural interactions through the production of a handbook on the concept of quality of life, by implementing pilot actions and developing integrated management plans for urban-rural interactions in seven partner city-regions as well as by gathering good practices and case examples from around the region.

Looking ahead

As the whole of the EU is looking ahead and beyond the current programme period, it is clear that territorial cohesion policy is and will remain a hot and lively debated issue. For us it is clear that any cohesion policy and territorial programme for 2014-2020 will need to help all regions become a strong force for sustainable development and for tackling the specific challenges of urban-rural interactions. We hope that our

vision of sustainable cities and towns in symbiosis with vibrant rural areas will be a shared goal not only for the Baltic Sea Region but also beyond.

<sup>1</sup> For more information about New Bridges visit the web site <http://www.urbanrural.net/>



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The contribution of transnational projects to territorial cohesion in the Baltic Sea Region



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Programme cooperation area © Baltic Sea Region Programme, Joint Technical Secretariat

Transnational cooperation projects contribute, in principle, to all different aspects of territorial cohesion (TC) e.g. diminishing disparities while profiling territories (shaping individual characteristics, enhancing strength/reducing weaknesses), supporting their harmonious sustainable development (demand versus resources) and supporting inter-regional networking and governance. Many effects however, are not directly measurable (e.g. in terms of increasing GDP or reducing disparities in standards of living) and have rather long-term impacts. Moreover,

such impacts cannot be addressed only by certain projects but by a combination with other activities. Transnational projects however, create typical outcomes and effects that can be described by both quantitative indicators (number of example solutions, durable networks, project products, involved actors etc.) and qualitative evaluation. Transnational projects usually create “blueprints” for solving problems, which benefit from a multi-stakeholder (cross-sectoral), vertical (involving different administrative levels) and multi-country dialogue. Those (very often)

innovative “example solutions” are usually tested within the project’s lifetime and later on applied in different countries or even on a European level. That’s why transnational projects also influence TC in a given area in the medium term. Typical impacts consist of the mobilisation of financial resources, the promotion of new standards, procedures, instruments and brands (e.g. tourism routes), the qualification of personnel and improved quality management, the enhancement of capabilities in governance and controlling, as well as in strengthening European and inter-cultural competence (cf. also Huebner and Stellfeldt-Koch 2009). Evaluations revealed that 90 % of all projects reached the intended results and continued implementing them (JTS/MA 2008). An overview of how those projects influence TC is provided in the table below.

Only direct impacts were counted. The overview shows that transnational projects most often contribute to a harmonious and balanced (sustainable) development of re-

gions, but in a similar degree also to sharpening the individual characteristics of regions and cities and to reducing territorial disparities. The weaker influence on East-West disparities of Interreg IVB projects (compared to IIIB) can be explained by the fact that some projects in Interreg IIIB were dedicated to East-West cooperation directly (using specific funds). In Interreg IVB, there is a much stronger involvement of Eastern European partners in all projects (44 out of 46 projects), which was not always counted as reducing disparities. Also Belarusian partners participated more intensively. The higher attention given to durable outcomes (left after the project) in Interreg IVB is visible in the higher share of creation of durable cooperation networks. The examples listed below present some highlights (see also Görmar 2009).

**Promoting a territorial balance and reducing development gaps between “East and West”**  
Intensive East-West cooperation results in increasing competences for

all partners in many thematic fields and in reducing development gaps in the medium term. An example is the project „South Baltic Arc”, which elaborated harmonised development concepts and plans for regions or business areas, and proposed improvements for transport connections in the South-eastern Baltic Sea area including Kaliningrad. The project „Rail Baltica” developed proposals towards improving rail connections of the Baltic States via Poland to Berlin and Western Europe. The projects „BEN - Baltic Euroregional Network” und “BEN-East” transferred experience of “Euro-regional” cross-border cooperation among others to partners from Russia and Belarus. More recently, the project EWTC II<sup>1</sup> promotes an East-West (green) transport corridor. The project “East-West Window” developed proposals on how the economic and innovation potential of Northwest Russia can be better utilised for the development of Russia and of the Baltic Sea Region.<sup>2</sup>

Impacts of Interreg IIIB and IVB projects in the Baltic Sea Region on territorial cohesion										
Cohesion aspects	Reducing territorial disparities	of which			Profiling areas	Ensuring balanced development	of which		Durable networks	Total number of impacts
		East-West	North-South	urban-rural			on land	on sea		
Interreg programme										
Interreg III B (No. of impacts of 129 projects)	38	23	5	10	45	50	33	17	11	144
Interreg IVB (No. of impacts of 46 projects)	14	7	2	5	12	25	15	10	9	60
Interreg III B (% of impacts)	26	16	3	7	31	35	23	12	8	100
Interreg IVB (% of impacts)	23	12	3	8	20	42	25	17	15	100

Source: BBSR project databases Interreg IIIB/IVB (IVB: May 2010), own calculations  
Multiple answers possible; 15 Interreg IIIB and 5 Interreg IVB projects without direct impact





Multimodal transport in East-West-Relation  
© Baltic Sea Region Programme, Joint Technical Secretariat

### Diminishing North-South divide

Projects have rarely in a direct way addressed the issue of diminishing North-South divide. At the same time however, a number of projects promoted specific potentials of the Northernmost territories, for example in the field of tourism, use of biomass and wind energy, promotion of certain development zones or sub-regions, such as the Barents region, or upgrading of transport infrastructure. The project COINCO contributed to the strengthening of North-South transport connections. The project developed strategies and investment proposals for transport infrastructure and for fostering innovations in a corridor between Oslo and East Germany and further South. A successor project, SCANDRIA, tries to better connect Scandinavia via Central Europe (East Germany and Poland) with the Adriatic Sea while developing the areas adjacent to the corridor. A similar approach is applied by the project SoNorA with focus on Polish territories.<sup>3</sup>

### Promoting urban-rural cooperation and reducing disparities

A number of projects elaborated solutions for the development of rural areas or for how the development momentum of metropolises or cities can be better used for areas in their vicinity. An example is the project „Metropolitan Areas“. In transnational collaboration, the project partners elaborated strategies for urban-rural cooperation and pre-investment planning in order to make use of innovation potentials of the different areas. The project also transferred governance mod-

els across borders. Thus, the Berlin-Brandenburg model was used to reorganise urban-rural cooperation in Oslo and Stockholm region. Berlin and Brandenburg made use of the Stockholm model of urban-rural transport. The STRING project developed solutions for spreading benefits from the booming metropolitan regions and Öresund cooperation to more peripheral regions in that area. This experience will become beneficial to other potential cluster cooperations in the area. Respective efforts are currently undertaken within the network of Baltic metropolises „BaltMet“ and through the Union of Baltic Cities (UBC) with the help of the Interreg IVB-project New Bridges. The latter tries to strengthen the quality of life through improved management of urban-rural interaction.<sup>4</sup>

### Sharpening the profile of regions and cities

The key motto of the Green Paper on TC „Turning territorial diversity into strength“ is a key objective of many transnational cooperation projects. In the past, especially the cultural and natural heritage was promoted as a regional development factor. Projects on transnational culture and tourism routes, like EuRoB (European Route of Brick Gothic) and Baltic FortRoute (Baltic Culture and Tourism Route of Fortresses) contributed to marketing common cultural assets in transnational cooperation. Beyond that, the projects helped to foster tourism and the complex of culture-related industries of the participating cities and regions. Both projects also supported TC between Western and Eastern areas of

the Baltic Sea region. Increasingly, projects take as starting points the specific strongholds of the knowledge society in the Baltic Sea region. An outstanding example is the project „ScanBaltCampus“, where 31 project partners from administration, research and business economy promoted development and cluster formation in the field of biotechnology and life sciences. This approach is very much extended in the current structural fund period. It can be exemplified by projects which aim to develop the potentials and cluster formation in the fields of bioenergy (Bioenergy Promotion), mobile IT-applications (BONITA), food industry (Baltfood), plasma technology (PlasTEP), audio-visual industry (FM – First Motion) or craft firms in the field of environmental and building technologies (BSR Quick).<sup>5</sup>

### Maintaining and sustainably using the Baltic Sea as main common resource

Promoting a harmonised approach towards the Baltic Sea as the main commonly shared resource of all countries in the area is a key field for TC policy. Such approach is intended to make use of the sea without spoiling the interests of others and to ensure a sustainable development. Already in the previous Interreg programme (IIIB), almost one third of all 129 approved projects addressed such an objective with almost 20 projects supporting directly an improved environmental status of the Baltic Sea. In the new programme (IVB), such issue is one out of four top priorities. It is also a key objective of the Baltic Sea Strategy of the European Union (CEC 2009) and of

the Long Term Perspective of VASAB (2009). Projects aim at reducing water pollution from agriculture (Baltic Compass), urban settlements (PURE), contaminated sediments (SMOCS), ships (Baltic Master, Clean Ship and BSR InnoShip), oil spill and hazardous substances (BRISK, COHIBA), unsafe navigation and ship accidents (EfficienSea) or insufficient river basin management (WATERPRAXIS). Moreover, the project „BaltSea Plan“ supports a common approach to maritime spatial planning in the Baltic Sea Region as an example for other areas in Europe.<sup>6</sup>

### Summary and conclusions

Transnational projects contribute to all different aspects of territorial cohesion. Projects promote cooperation and competition between regions at the same time. Effects can only to some extent be measured or quantified. A combination of quantitative and qualitative evaluations is necessary. The impact on TC increases with the degree of wider implementation of example solutions within or after the projects' lifetime. In the future, a better specification seems necessary on how far projects contribute to different territorial development and cohesion objectives.

1 Cf. [www.rail-baltica.net](http://www.rail-baltica.net), [www.benproject.org](http://www.benproject.org) and [www.eastwesttc.org](http://www.eastwesttc.org)

2 Cf. [www.vasab.org](http://www.vasab.org)

3 Cf. [www.coinco-cms.dk](http://www.coinco-cms.dk), [www.scandriaproject.eu](http://www.scandriaproject.eu) and [www.sonoraproject.eu](http://www.sonoraproject.eu)

4 Cf. [www.balticstring.net](http://www.balticstring.net) and [www.urbanrural.net](http://www.urbanrural.net)

5 Cf. [www.scanbaltcampus.eu](http://www.scanbaltcampus.eu), [www.bioenergy-promotion.net](http://www.bioenergy-promotion.net), [www.bonita-project.eu](http://www.bonita-project.eu), [www.baltfood.de](http://www.baltfood.de), [www.plastep.eu](http://www.plastep.eu), [www.firstmotion.eu](http://www.firstmotion.eu) and [www.hanse-parlament.eu](http://www.hanse-parlament.eu)

6 Cf. [www.purebalticsea.eu](http://www.purebalticsea.eu), [www.smocs.eu](http://www.smocs.eu), [www.balticmaster.org](http://www.balticmaster.org), [www.cohiba-project.net](http://www.cohiba-project.net), [www.brisk.helcom.fi](http://www.brisk.helcom.fi), [www.efficiensea.org](http://www.efficiensea.org), [www.waterpraxis.net](http://www.waterpraxis.net), [www.baltseaplan.eu](http://www.baltseaplan.eu)



Clean Ship: Reducing ship emissions  
© Jens Kurnol, BBSR



## The territorialized transport policy of the European Union. The case of green transport corridors in the Baltic Sea Region



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### Transport policy in the context of territorial cohesion

The Territorial Agenda of the European Union (2007) emphasises that mobility in a polycentric European territory requires a pro-active transport policy that supports formation of integrated and multimodal transport systems. So orientated transport policy has obvious implications for territorial cohesion. On one hand, it improves connections to and within less developed regions, on the other it affects the location of economic activity and the pattern of settlements. Further, it will always address specific territorial problems, like an uneven distribution of transport infrastructure and facilities (e.g. primary road and rail links, terminals etc.) or access to public services of general interest. The question, however, remains to what extent the transport policy of the European Union can be territorialised, in line with the new paradigm of the EU Cohesion Policy as postulated by Barca (2009). This implies: tailored to specific places, catalysing the economy of flows, and implemented through multilevel governance.

The territorialisation of the transport policy can make use of specific initiatives, which stand on the crossroads of the transport and territorial cohesion policies, such as the green transport corridors.

### Green transport corridors

As stated in the Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan (CEC 2007), green transport corridors shall demonstrate a number of distinctive features, such as:

- low impacts on the human and natural environment, including safety and security issues as well as energy efficiency;
- complementarity of services offered by short sea shipping, rail, inland waterways and road transport modes to enable an optimal and sustainable utilisation of resources (principle of co-modality);
- presence of adequate transshipment facilities at strategic locations (such as seaports, inland ports, marshalling yards and other relevant logistics sites) and supply points (biofuels and other forms of green propulsion);
- harmonised system of rules developed from a customer perspective, with openness for all actors interested in the corridor services;
- platform for innovation and testing polygon for new transport technologies and intelligent transport applications.

Apart from these functional aspects the concept of green corridors also entails some territorial issues. In the case of the Baltic Sea Region, they may be stated as follows:

1. On account of the Region's geographic specificity, future green corridors in the BSR will become multimodal, with integrated road, rail and short sea shipping links (in accordance with the principle of co-modality).

2. The BSR green corridors will contain both land and maritime sections, thus spanning various components of the EU transport policy (TEN-T and Motorways of the Sea, respectively).

3. The BSR green corridors should ideally form a network spread over the territory of the whole Region.

The emergence of such a network should be facilitated by harmonisation measures in national and regional transport planning as stipulated by the EU Baltic Sea Strategy (CEC 2009) and lifted up by the running transnational cooperation projects (such as TransBaltic).

4. The future network of the BSR green corridors will be subject to intervention by both transport and regional development policies. Individual corridors will be managed by public-private consortia that will introduce mechanisms to administer, monitor and steer the performance quality of infrastructure and services offered in the corridor.

### Green corridors in new Member States

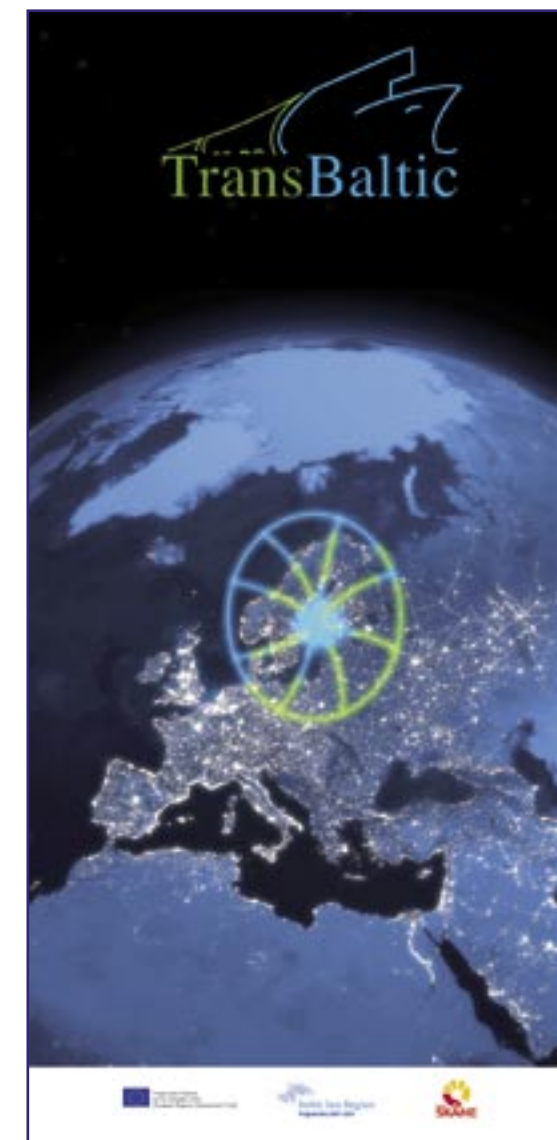
Of particular importance is the uncertainty whether green corridors may develop in the hinterlands of the new EU Member States and Russia. Whereas in the old Member States of the Baltic Sea Region the governments and business operators openly declare their willingness to introduce green transport solutions, it might be likely that Poland, the three Baltic States and the Russian Federation would like to first satisfy their needs for high-capacity transport infrastructure - at the expense of investing in green transport technologies. In consequence, the BSR could see the emergence of a new territorial East-West divide (Szydarowski 2010).

In mitigation of that particular threat, instruments of the now refurbished cohesion policy may play an essential role.

First, the complexity of drivers behind such a scenario exceeds the limits of policy sectors and does not respect administrative boundaries. Hence effective green corridors require an integrated approach and cooperative response from various authorities and stakeholders.

Second, the green corridors are a transnational issue, which calls for international cooperation in the inception and implementation process. Any strategic vision and management strategy need to be adjusted to the specificity of the territories they cross, that is, to take into account different priorities and development needs of the old Member States, the new Member States and the neighbouring countries.

Third, in development of green corridors an emphasis ought to be placed on their impact on sustainable regional development, with transport nodes and flow patterns determining formation of functional regions and networks.



The Green Scenario by the TransBaltic project  
© TransBaltic project

## Analysis of the relationship between climate change and territorial cohesion on the basis of the BalticClimate project



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### Climate change as a key issue for territorial development

Combating climate change requires a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, as well as various degrees of adaptation in each respect from the global to the local level, including changes in territorial capital. Thus, both mitigation pledges at the international and national level, as well as the respective adaptation measures must be translated to the local level in order to ensure preparedness for potential climate change.

Climate change is a key issue for territorial development (see Territorial Agenda of EU 2007). It is cross-sectoral, requires an integrative approach and involvement of a wide range of local and regional decision makers including the superordinate level.

Cooperation between the urban and the rural areas or neighbouring municipalities can make the outcome and results even more stable. Accordingly, a policy of adaptation to climate change needs to take account of a number of different aspects such as to cushion any negative impacts from the outset, to prepare the population for the impacts of climate change, to develop long-term strategies and decision taking, even against a backdrop of varying scenarios marked by high degrees of uncertainty, and to explore whatever opportunities for development may arise from climate change.

### The BalticClimate Project under the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013

The idea behind BalticClimate<sup>1</sup> is to move from looking at climate change as an overwhelming global

challenge to seeing it as the opportunity for local actions, which if taken in time, could even provide local level benefits, since the climate change phenomenon also entails opportunities and not only obstacles for the development of the region. This might come true thanks to development of a simple step-by-step approach to assess the vulnerability to potential climate change impacts in cooperation with model regions from urban and rural areas in Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Germany, and Russia. In a testing phase the regions implement cases dealing with at least two of the following themes: energy, housing, transport or agriculture. The aim is to identify local triple-win opportunities in terms of climate change adaptation, mitigation, and economic development.

This innovative methodology, applicable to other BSR regions shall improve the capacities and cooperation of BSR cities and rural areas for dealing with climate change in an integrated way in every day-practice, thus leading to sustainable development. The mid to long-term process of accounting for climate change information in planning shall result in increased competitiveness of small and medium sized cities and rural areas and their surrounding regions. This shall also improve the territorial cohesion (TC) in the Baltic Sea Region, in Europe, and at global level.

### Relationship of climate change and territorial cohesion

“People should not be disadvantaged by wherever they happen to live or work in the Union”! (CEC 2004). This quotation of the 3rd Co-

hesion Report is the main anchor for the relation between both climate change and territorial cohesion.

Impacts of climate change are, in a first line, environmental ones (i.e. inundations, lack of precipitation, heat peaks, etc.). This means impacts are materialized in one or another way in the space we live in. It may come to a depletion of the environment and to a changed distribution of environmental goods and bads. In accordance, depending on how deep the impacts have been/will be, social and economic impacts will follow to a more or less extent.

People in affected places are bound to those places through individual identity, their social and economic settings and cultural embeddedness.<sup>2</sup> Opportunities could not be taken elsewhere by every individual due to emotional or simple economic constraints (i.e. mobility costs, loss of value of own housing in affected areas while housing prices rise in less affected areas). Hence, for different reasons, mobility towards “better places” is no solution, neither for an individual nor for the society as a whole (being aware of that, for some reasons it might be a solution for an individual but in cases where climate change impacts are not the driving force). Moreover, “better places” could turn into bad ones with the ongoing changes.

In any case, society will have to pay for the consequences deriving from impacts of climate change or leave individuals alone struggling and even fighting for resources and good living conditions. Society can either pay ex-post for problems which may occur through climate change migration or pay ex-ante for the territorial

cohesion of places. This would fit much better to actual political statements as given above.

TC is a profoundly practical principle. As an agent for equity among citizens, it can be the ultimate operational expression of European solidarity: as the path to optimal use of all of Europe’s territorial diversity, which constitutes a considerable comparative advantage in an era of global turbulence, recognizing the varying fragility of places, and making sustainable use of territorial potentials, it is vital to Europe’s future. The EU must understand this task as a matter of joint responsibility with the Member States and regions. In adapting to climate change and implementing TC, the European Community, the Member States, regions, local authorities, the private sector and NGOs are called upon to act in a consistent fashion, as also provided in the EU’s Territorial Agenda under the process of territorial governance.

Summing up, the main impact of climate change on the notion of TC is a more in-depth understanding of the role of territorial assets for long-term development and the way in which those assets might be influenced by external shocks and the role of local and regional policies to prevent negative outcomes in this respect.

<sup>1</sup> Baltic Challenges and Chances for local and regional development generated by Climate Change is an EU co-financed project under the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013, which will be implemented from 2009 to 2011(<http://www.balticclimate.org/>).

<sup>2</sup> The author is grateful for a very good presentation of and discussion with Simin Davoudi on the occasion of spa-ce.net conference on September, 23, 2010.



Development process for improving the capacities for dealing with climate change © ARL



BalticClimate Target Areas for pilot implementation in partner countries and associated partner country © ARL



Territorialisation of the Polish national development policy



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**Territorial cohesion as a state and as a process**

Despite the lack of agreed definitions at EU level (cf. Dühr et al 2010), the debate on territorial cohesion (TC) in Poland has been rather active. Several expert appraisements have been contracted by the Ministry of Regional Development to better place TC in the context of national development policy (Baucz, Łotocka, Żuber 2009). Based on their findings, the policy has been recently reshaped in order to ensure a better fit between territorial and socio-economic aspects of development. The Long Term Development Strategy of Poland will have two equally important parts: the socio-economic and the territorial one (Ustawa 2006). Adopted in July of this year, the National Strategy for Regional Development 2010-2020 directly corresponds to the Polish Spatial Development Concept currently under preparation.

In the National Position to the Green Book, the Polish government has proposed to treat territorial cohesion both as a state and as a process:

- Territorial cohesion is a state of territory development in which processes of exchange and transfers in economic and social spheres proceed effectively, guaranteeing socially and economically efficient allocation of resources, with optimal use of its endogenous potential.
- Achieving territorial cohesion is a process based on shaping the space of the EU territory through integrated management and balanced de-

velopment. This shall provide for the best development of potentials of particular territories on continental, national, regional and local scales and for achieving EU development aims, including social and economic cohesion.

Additionally in the same document it was underlined that the territory should not be treated as an administrative unit but rather as a functional area for which it is justified to create conditions of harmonious development allowing for use of specific endogenous potentials. At the same time, aspects important for all of the EU should be taken into consideration - not just for the particular territory of the member state.

Out of the different dimensions of TC as underlined by Szlachta and Dühr (in this issue), in Poland the focus has been placed on cooperation, networking and functionality. Polish conceptualization of TC is based on such categories as: accessibility standards to territorially specific public services, networking of endogenous potentials (in the dynamic context), as well as the development and further extension of functional areas around growth centres. In that context, a territorially coherent area of a country or region would appear as a network of mutually linked functional areas of varied spatial ranges to offer citizens access to workplaces and public services indispensable for development and preservation of social and human capital (Szlachta, Zaucha 2010).

**The Spatial Development Concept for Poland**

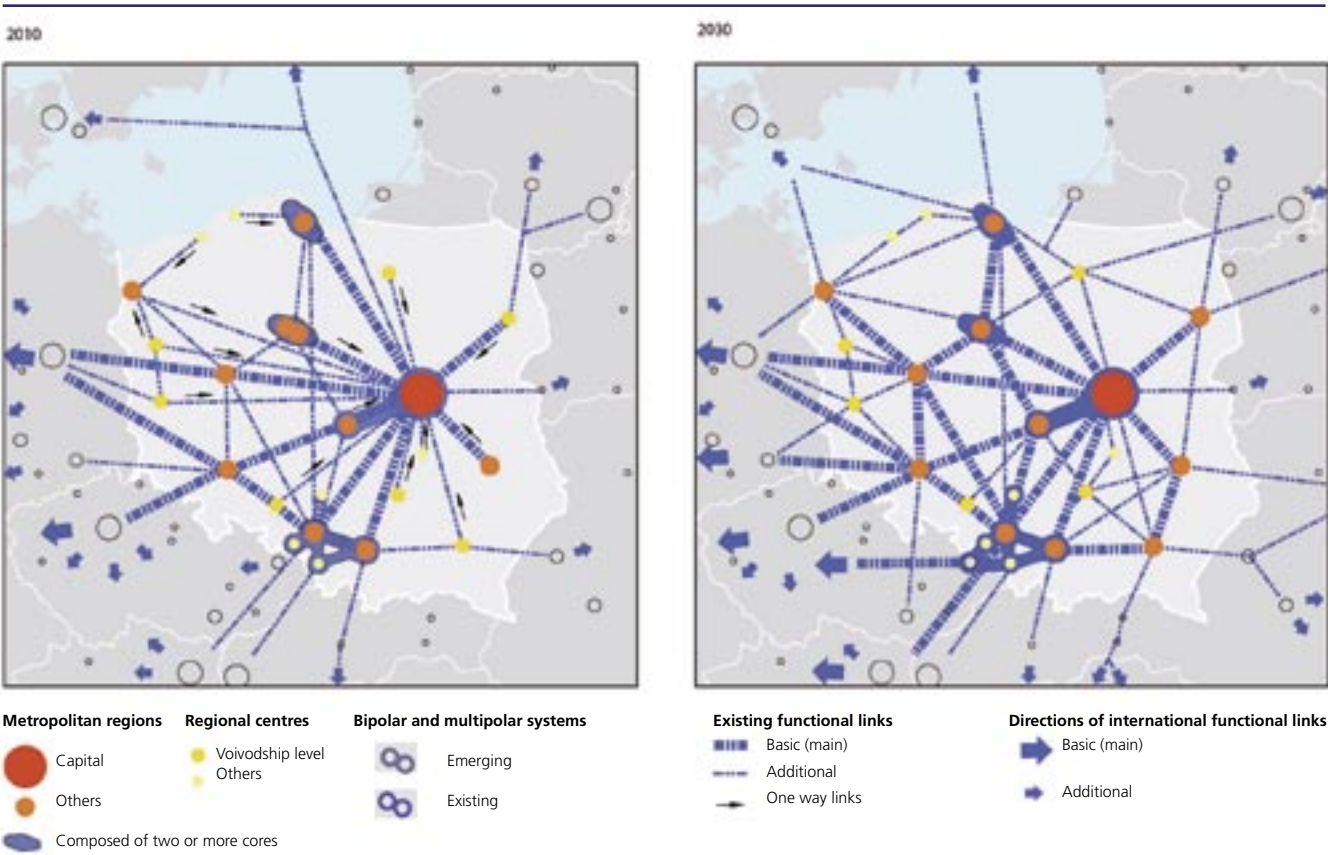
This conceptualization can be clearly seen in the recently elaborated Polish Spatial Development Concept<sup>1</sup>. TC plays an important guiding role in all six strategic goals for the spatial development of Poland but mainly in (i) the strengthening of territorial cohesion, (ii) the increase in competitiveness of major Polish urban centres in the European space, (iii) the preservation of high environmental quality, protection of

water and forest resources and (iv) the achievement of rational and orderly spatial development.

Several territorial vehicles, specifically dedicated to the implementation of TC form the core of the Concept. The most important are following:

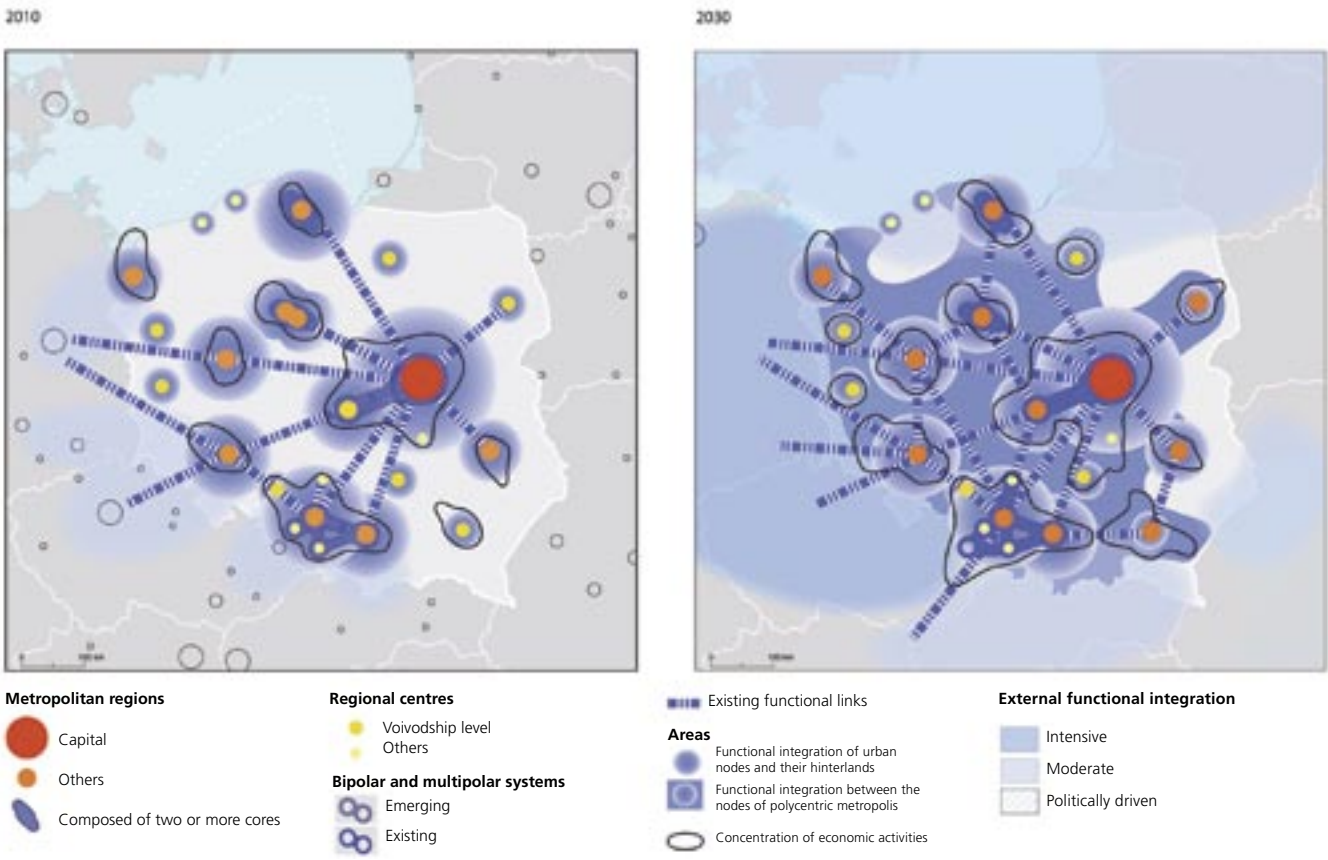
a) Polycentric metropolis – network of Polish metropolitan regions composed of the largest urban nodes of the country by ensuring more efficient functional connections between them (Fig .1).

<sup>1</sup> The governmental document is still under elaboration so some quotations come from the preceding expert draft of the Polish Spatial Development Concept (Korcelli et al. 2010).



(Fig. 1) Draft Poland's Spatial Development Concept. Polycentric metropolis - functional relations between main urban nodes in 2010 and in 2030 © Ministry for Regional Development





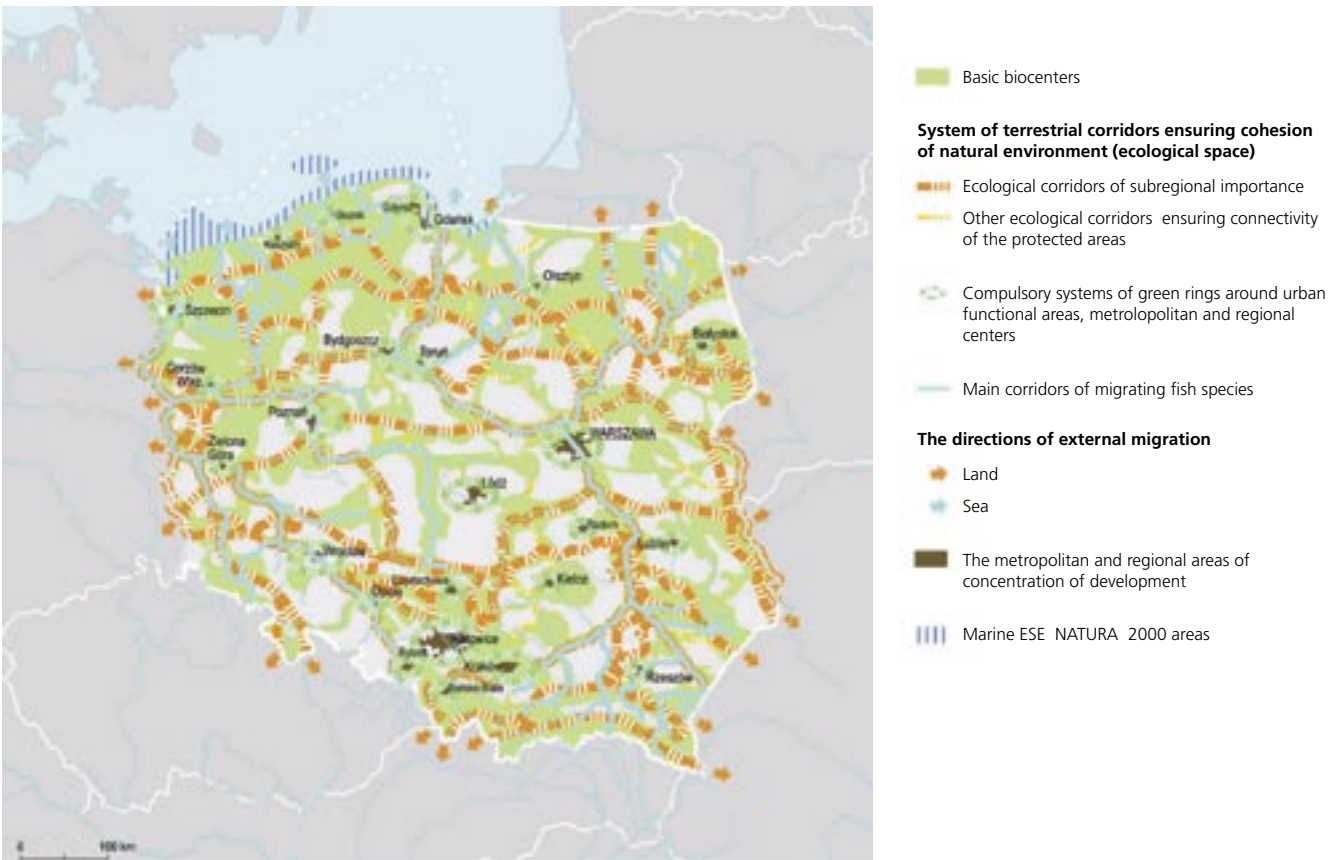
(Fig. 2) Draft Poland's Spatial Development Concept Functional integration in Polish space 2010 and 2030  
© Ministry for Regional Development

b) Formation of the functional regions around the largest cities and also around regional capitals (up to the county level) through joint planning beyond administrative borders, integration of labour markets and improved accessibility (Fig. 2).

c) Network of ecological corridors both on land and on the sea (green and blue corridors) joining the most important habitats and diminishing fragmentation of the Polish space (Fig 3).

The most interesting of them seems to be the concept of polycentric metropolis. It emphasizes the importance of concentrated development, driven by cooperation between urban nodes instead of development spreading along the transport corridors/development zones. It also accentuates the importance of better use of the existing endogenous potentials and their activation through networking. It helps to maintain the polycentric structure of the Polish territory while resolving the conflict between polycentricity at the European and the national level. Shortening the distances between large

cities will facilitate the development of metropolitan functions, diminish internal migration flows and decrease primacy of Warsaw in the urban hierarchy. Therefore it serves both cohesion and competitiveness purposes. Moreover, it is also environmental friendly (less conflicts with nature conservation due to spatial concentration of development in space) and in line with the idea of a knowledge-based economy. In the European space Poland might become a bridging territory between the Pentagon<sup>2</sup> and innovation driven Scandinavia.



(Fig.3) Draft Poland's Spatial Development Concept Protected areas and ecological corridors in 2030  
© Ministry for Regional Development

Other concepts important for the implementation of TC still need further investigation. This is the case for example for accessibility standards to public services of general interest, which should be territory specific, e.g. take into consideration different features/characteristics of the Polish space. This issue was highlighted in the document as an important task to be solved in the action programme for implementing the Polish Spatial Development Concept. The Polish Spatial Development Concept will also have a strong implementation part in line with the

TC idea of integrative policy making. The Concept will integrate different policies affecting the same territory, it will provide spatial policy with an appropriate monitoring and evaluation system and in the long run it will become the main part of the Long Term Development Strategy of Poland – the key policy document of the country.

<sup>2</sup> The core area of the EU, defined by the metropolises of London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Hamburg (CSD 1999, 20).

The Swedish approach to territorial cohesion and the case of the Stockholm region



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Territorial cohesion in the Treaty of Lisbon

With the addition of territorial cohesion (TC) to the Economic and Social dimension of Cohesion Policy in the Treaty of Lisbon (2007)<sup>1</sup>, the Commission and the Member States now have a stronger mandate to put regions and territories at the heart of policy development. This means a strengthening of the territorial perspective in policy design, in the coordination of different sector policies, as well as a clearer mandate to develop multi-level governance.

The Swedish view on territorial cohesion

TC is most of all a methodological concept for a more integrated approach to territorial development, which must be based on the principle of subsidiarity. It adds a dimension to Cohesion Policy, but it is not a new policy in itself.

An important objective of TC is to make good use of the territorial potential in all regions. All regions can perform better if the policy mix and the governance can be adjusted to specific territorial possibilities and regional assets.

A region's territorial potential is determined by many factors such as geographical location, size, factor of production endowment, climate, traditions, natural resources, quality of life, social capital or the agglomeration economies provided by its cities. The measures to release this territorial potential are cooperation across territories as well as across administrative and sectoral boundaries.

From a Swedish point of view it is a question about the balance between affluent and well-developed regions on one hand, and regions that have specific challenges on the other. These weaker regions may be urban or rural, they may have low population densities or they may suffer from natural handicaps. TC must address both these perspectives.

Sweden has developed a Regional Growth Policy that emphasises both strengthening the competitiveness of all regions and supporting regions with natural or demographic handicaps, as well as regions undergoing extensive structural change.

Multi-level governance

TC implies that a functional geographical perspective should be applied in all territorial development work. This means that different issues have different geographical scales and boundaries, which in many cases cover territories in two or more countries. Multi-level governance also means that different levels of governance have their specific roles regarding the territorial development. While respecting the principle of subsidiarity, TC shows that methodologies for cross-border, cross-sectoral and multi-level governance approaches to development are of great interest to foster coordination, especially in the form of inspiring work and spreading good examples.

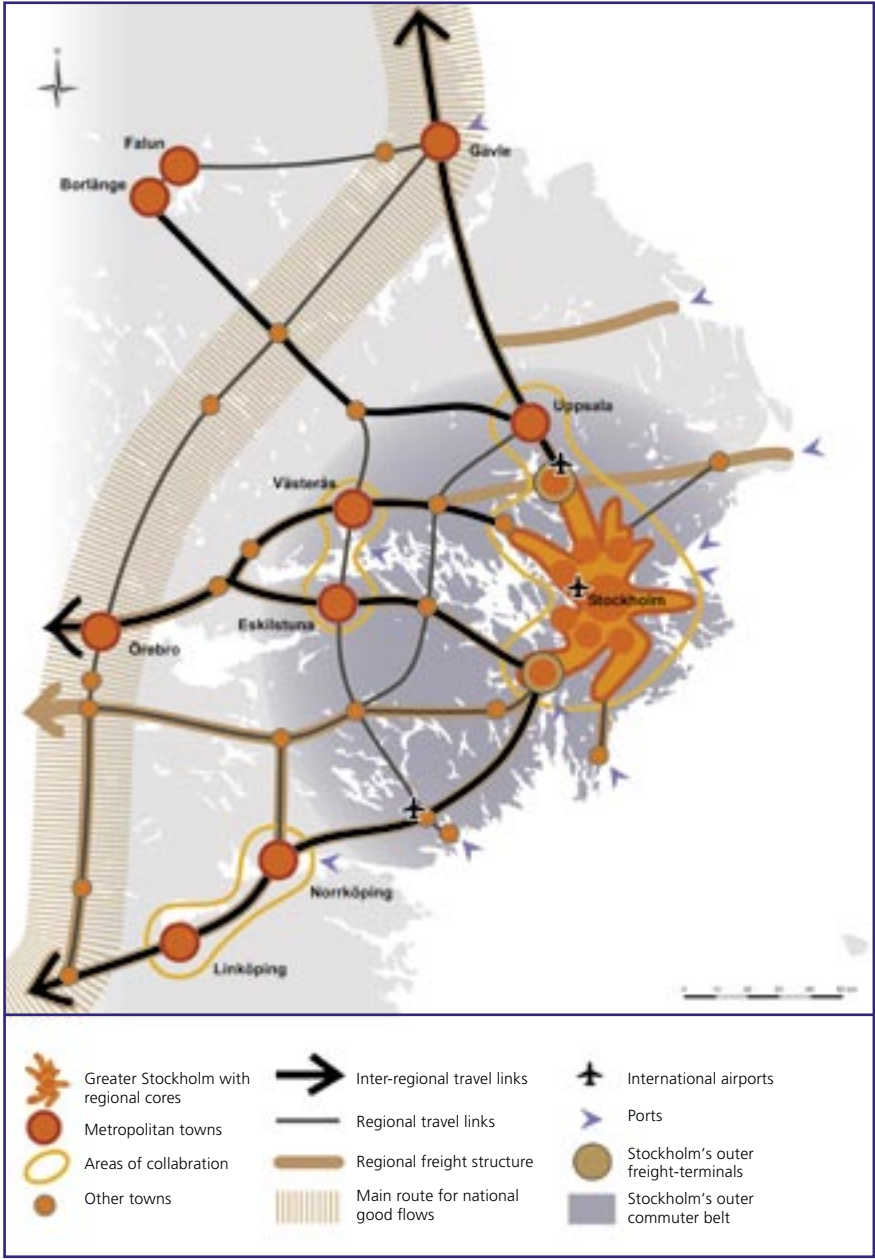
TC has a special role to play in cross-border cooperation. The macro-regional context with the EU Baltic Sea Strategy (CEC 2009) as the first

test case will be of exceptional interest, also from the cross-sectoral and multi-level governance point of view. The Swedish government emphasises the EU Baltic Sea Strategy as a highly interesting example of how to achieve TC when territorial challenges are shared in a macro-regional context. This new approach could contribute to aligning policy implementation with existing financial instruments and could serve as an example for other macro-regions sharing territorial challenges across borders.

Coordination and coherence between sector policies

One of the most important aims of TC is the cross-sectoral approach. If major sector policies are to take better account of territorial aspects, this must be done in a close dialogue with them and between them. The best way to achieve this is through a positive approach, assuming that each policy sector can more efficiently meet its goals if different territorial specificities are taken into account. Also cross-cutting aspects, such as gender, age and ethnicity should be taken into account in efforts to enhance policy coordination.

<sup>1</sup>The Treaty of Lisbon was signed in 2007, but entered into force in 2009.



Map from The Regional Development Plan of The Stockholm Region, RUFS 2010 - Combined development in East Central Sweden towards 2050. © Lantmäteriet Gävle 2010. Grant Grant I 2010/1618



In Sweden, the Government wishes to stimulate the participation of national sector authorities in regional development work by “Thematic groups of authorities” based around the identified national priorities for regional competitiveness, entrepreneurship and employment. The aim is to ensure continual contact and collaboration between regional representatives, national authorities and local authorities and give opportunities for knowledge acquisition and knowledge circulation.

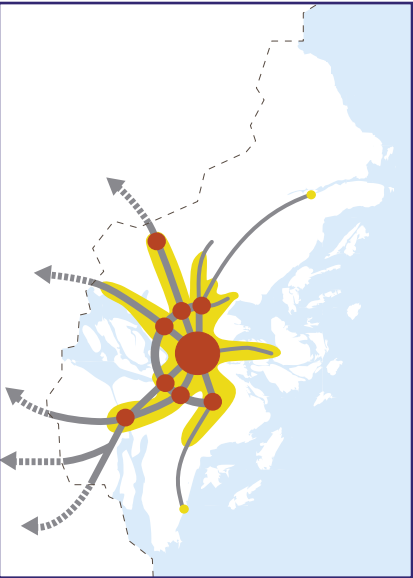
The work of regional coordinators dealing with the effects of the financial and economical crisis also had a true cross-sectoral approach. In order to facilitate contact and effective handling of proposals from the regional coordinators within the government and the ministries, a group of State Secretaries was established. The regional coordinators

also met the State Secretaries from different ministries regularly.

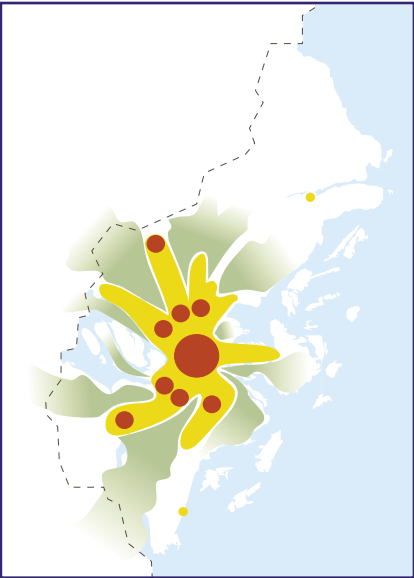
Another example is the National Strategy to strengthen the development in rural areas. To utilise the resources in rural areas and transform them into employment, growth, etc., all policy areas must contribute. The goal of the Government is therefore to better include the rural perspective in all policy areas. Every ministry has the assignment to look at its own policy area and put a rural perspective on it.

**The Regional Development Plan for the Stockholm region**

The principles and approach stemming from TC have also been used at a regional level, where The Regional Development Plan for the Stockholm Region (RUF 2010) is a good example. The vision is to make Stockholm Europe’s most attractive metropolitan region.



A resource-efficient and accessible urban structure  
© Regionplanekontoret

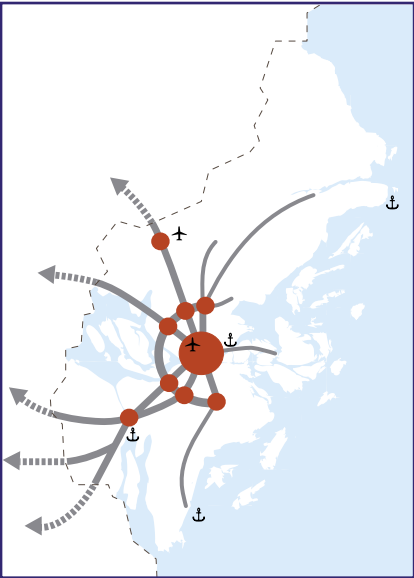


A high density urban environment, rich in experiences, with parks and green areas  
© Regionplanekontoret

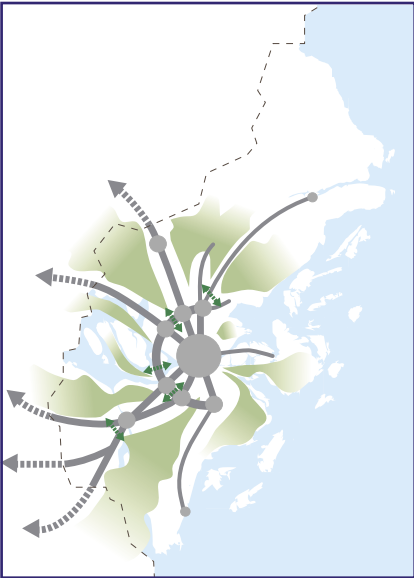
The four objectives show that sustainability and a cross-sectoral planning approach are important starting-points for RUF 2010, namely:

1. An open and **accessible region**, with equal opportunities and high accessibility for all types of journey;
2. A leading **growth region**, promoting innovation and a better framework for research, industry and culture;
3. A region with a **good living environment**, where people will have clean air and water and live in a safe and beautiful environment; and
4. A **resource-efficient region**, where the structure, urban development, transport systems, green wedges, education and technical services will enable an efficient use of resources.

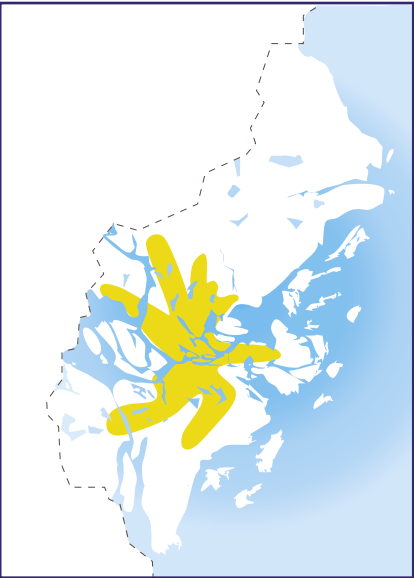
The Plan aims for a polycentric and dense urban structure supported by a developed traffic network, new companies setting up and an attractive range of education, culture and services. There is also a vision for a larger functional region of East Central Sweden with an urban structure linked together with rail transport as a basis.



A single, cohesive market for jobs and homes  
© Regionplanekontoret



New connections in harmony with nature  
© Regionplanekontoret



Aquatic environments play a dual role  
© Regionplanekontoret

## Connectivity in Estonian spatial planning and regional development policy



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Estonia is a country with a population of 1.34 million people and its territory is 43.4 thousand km<sup>2</sup>. Significant differences in the size of population of cities and rural municipalities result in local governments' highly varied capacity to administer local life and provide the essential services needed. The differences, primarily in work and education opportunities, result in the migration of the young and active citizens to growth centres. 69,5% of the population of Estonia lives in urban settlements.

Since Estonia's regaining of independence in 1991, international but also national integration have been important priorities, in order to ensure the security of the country and its development. One of the vehicles to this end is territorial cohesion policy, focusing on ensuring harmonious, sustainable and polycentric development, which enables citizens and organisations to make the most of the inherent features of different regions in a sustainable way.

The national spatial plan "Estonia 2010" (EESTI 2010<sup>1</sup>), which was prepared in 2000, offers useful illustration of how to make proper use of the notion of territorial cohesion (TC) in practice. The Plan promotes Estonia's better spatial integration with the rest of Europe. One of the five general aims of "Estonia 2010" has been set out as follows: "Balanced and solid binding of Estonia through transport connections and power networks both to Eastern and Western Europe will improve the position of Estonia in the international employment system and speed up

economic growth. Good physical connections will support and accelerate economic and social integration into the European Union". In order to achieve that, Estonia is actively participating in spatial planning related cooperation projects within the European Union as well as the Baltic Sea countries, including international transport corridors such as Rail Baltica and Via Baltica. Cooperation with Russia focuses on transport infrastructure, putting modern means of communication into use and simplifying cross-border movement. An integrated maritime policy and the connection of ports to other infrastructure make up one of the key success factors for Estonia's international competitiveness. Active cooperation between Estonia's capital city Tallinn and Finland's capital Helsinki as twin cities is discussed.

For internal territorial cohesion the starting point is in the analysis of changes in the spatial structures. Many important elements of the concept of TC can be found in the general aims of the plan. The first aim focuses on safeguarding the spatial accessibility to basic services. One should note that this approach was pushed forward in Estonia many years before public services of general interest received prominent place in the EU planning agenda. The next aim of the plan concentrates on local advantages (nowadays territorial potentials in TC terms) and on curtailing of time-space distances, the connectivity between cities and the formation of town networks. Under the aim dealing with natural environment preservation and improvement one can find the concept of

green network connecting the core areas of ecological value (forests, swamps). The green network is expected to cover 50% of the Estonian territory. Also, heritage landscapes were set out to be identified.

To conclude, it is evident that TC is a guiding notion of "Estonia 2010" with the focus on unique territorial potentials, connectivity and networking, as well as accessibility in particular, to the services of general public interest. The plan provides general guidelines for the preparation of county plans and local governments' comprehensive plans.

At present, a new national plan "Estonia 2030+" is being prepared, de-

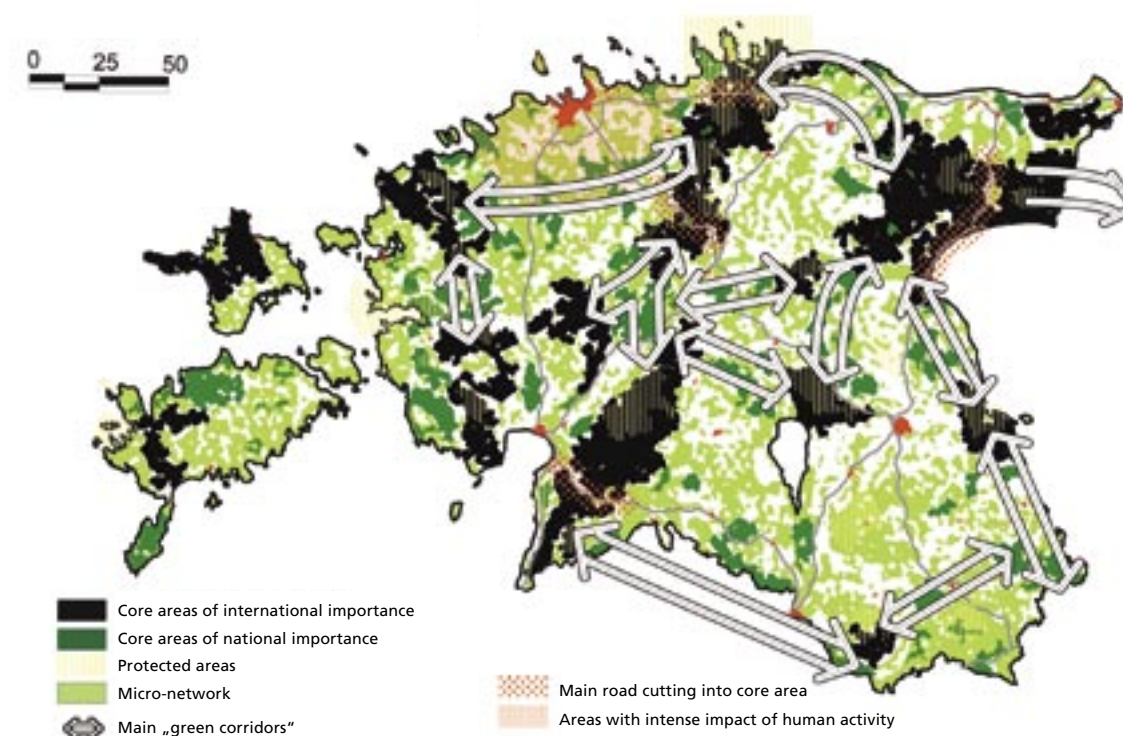
veloping further the topics covered in the earlier document: settlement, transport, energy and green network. It follows the "Estonia 2010" approach, although new topics are introduced: sea regions, rural settlements (in addition to urban networks) and the accessibility of public services.

The national thematic plan on social infrastructure is in the final phase of preparation. The document is based on the understanding that the precondition for ensuring balanced spatial development of a country is to meet people's basic needs in every corner of Estonia. In the document, county level spatial rational provides for optimizing the social infrastruc-

ture of the whole country and for improving the transport system that provides people with access to everyday services.

To sum up the state of Estonia's current territorial cohesion, it can be said that Estonia's spatial planning and regional development policies are aligned with the objectives of European territorial cohesion, however their influence should be strengthened. The coordination of the territorial dimensions and the impact of horizontal and vertical sectoral policies need further elaboration.

<sup>1</sup> Available at [http://www.siseministeerium.ee/public/Eesti2010\\_2.pdf](http://www.siseministeerium.ee/public/Eesti2010_2.pdf)



Green Network of Estonia, Source: EESTI 2010, p 32 © Jüri Jagomägi and Jüri Roosare



The relevance of Territorial Cohesion in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern – a spatial planning point of view



Petra Schmidt

**Harmonious, sustainable, polycentric development as the core of territorial cohesion**  
With the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) territorial cohesion is defined for the first time as an objective of European policies in addition to social and economic cohesion. Although the term “territorial cohesion” is not explicitly defined, it is obvious that a cohesion policy which follows an integrated spatial approach sets the course for spatial development in Europe. To achieve the objective of territorial cohesion it is essential that its principles of harmonious, sustainable and polycentric development be reflected even more strongly in national and European sectoral policies with a spatial impact.

**Territorial cohesion in the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Spatial Development Programme**

The Spatial Development Programme Mecklenburg-Vorpommern 2005 (Landesraumentwicklungsprogramm, LEP) aims to implement the principles of sustainable spatial development, bringing the territory's social and economic requirements into harmony with its ecological functions and leading to a long-term, large-scale and balanced spatial development. In this spirit, the root idea of territorial cohesion as fixed in the Lisbon Treaty (2007) is an inherent part of the Programme. The implementation of the general outline of sustainable spatial development is anchored in guidelines for spatial development and in binding objectives and principles. Due to the initial economic, social and ecological position of the region, the creation and assurance of employment take priority.

The twelve guidelines for spatial development that introduce the Programme represent the main focal points which are of special importance for the region's future viable development. The Spatial Development Programme Mecklenburg-Vorpommern seeks to take into account the present structural conditions, i.e. a fundamental demographic change which affects the levels of supply of infrastructural, social and cultural services, the demands arising from increasing European integration, and global challenges. Particular attention is paid to the opportunities offered and the risks presented by the Baltic Sea Region. Many important elements of the concept of territorial cohesion are reflected in the guidelines for spatial development of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

- The twelve guidelines for spatial development are:
1. Progress of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern to a cosmopolitan, European region in the Baltic Sea Region.
  2. Enhancement of competitive position of the business location Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.
  3. Creation of life and job perspectives, especially for young inhabitants and families.
  4. Development of the education, culture, science, research and technology location Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.
  5. Improvement of transport infrastructure ensuring high-quality links between centres in regions and agglomerations outside the regions (national and European space).
  6. Strengthening the agricultural country Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.
  7. Protection and cautious use of the high valued nature.
  8. Profiling of the Tourism and Health state Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.
  9. Conservation, use and branding of the cultural and historical potential of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, assurance of high built environment and creation of a urban development fit for the future.
  10. Development of systems of central places and city-urban-regions.
  11. Development of rural areas in their economic power.
  12. Assurance and use of the potential of the coastal waters.

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**City networks and urban-rural partnership in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern**

The sustainable development of both rural and urban areas as well as the development of urban-rural partnerships are of particular importance in terms of territorial cohesion. Another important aspect in this context is therefore the development of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern through means of a network of cities and through city-suburban cooperation. For the city-suburban regions (which represent the economic centres, compared with the larger rural regions), an imperative for cooperation and harmonisation has been declared in order to substantially contribute to an efficient and effective use of existing infrastructure. In the rural areas, which show considerable differences in their economic power and development potential, particular emphasis is being placed on further developing existing resources which have been exploited to quite varying degrees. Transport infrastructure requirements are oriented towards ensuring high-quality links between centres in the region and with agglomerations outside the region. An example is shown in the case of Rostock. The city-suburban cooperation fixed in the Spatial Development Programme Mecklenburg-Vorpommern will be assisted by activities to develop Rostock into a “regiopole”. The basic idea/question behind this concept is how to use the development potential of smaller large towns outside of metropolitan areas as a motor for economic and social development.

**Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in the European and supra-regional networks**

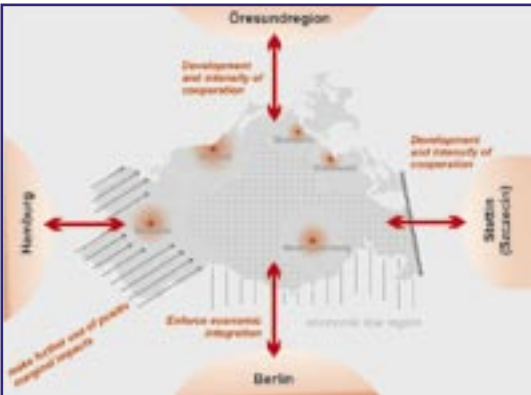
The Spatial Development Programme also aims at the integration of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in the European and supra-regional networks. Since the EU expansion in northern and eastern directions, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern has moved from its position on the outskirts towards the central part of Europe. One of the most crucial aspects of location - the “geography position” - is hereby enhanced. Moreover, the coastal state Mecklenburg-Vorpommern now moved in the direct catchment area of growth poles in the Baltic Sea Region. The economic consequence of this new advantageous location is obvious: given its limited endogenous potential, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern has to connect with the surrounding growth areas, to dock as a kind of “free rider” and to make special markets accessible.

**From guidelines to implementation**

All guidelines are specified in detail by binding objectives, principles and other requirements of spatial planning that build the framework for further development. This framework may guide those involved in public planning and those representing private interests at an early stage of preparing and implementing measures with spatial impacts. Therefore, the general outline of sustainable development expands into spatially significant sectoral planning as well as into other levels. For example, regional spatial development strategies which make the Spatial Development Programme more concrete from spatial and con-



Progress of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern to become a cosmopolitan, European region in the Baltic Sea Region  
© Supreme spatial planning authority



Spatial Development Programme Mecklenburg-Vorpommern  
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tent perspectives are an important basis for allocation of means in the frame of the European Social Fund. To sum up, the aspect of territorial cohesion is already an inherent part of spatial strategies and development, as well as spatially significant sectoral planning in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. To strengthen the implementation of territorial cohesion in the future it is essential that its principles of harmonious, sustainable and polycentric development be reflected even more strongly in national and European sectoral policies with a spatial impact.

## How to secure and use Baltic Sea coastal potential



**Heike Holzfuß**

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### Strengthening territorial cohesion through integrated coastal zone management – lead concepts of sustainable coastal zone development in Germany

#### Pressures on Baltic Sea coastal zones

Baltic Sea coastal zones are coming under increasing pressure from intensive use yet, at the same time they are ecologically valuable and sensitive areas. Coastal areas and the adjacent marine environment simultaneously cater to economic, transport and recreational needs imposed by tourism, navigation, fishing and trade and to an increasing degree also by pipelines and wind farms.

Conflicts between different uses are therefore bound to occur.

Due to the hydrographic and ecological conditions of the Baltic Sea it is highly vulnerable to external influences such as over-fertilisation, pollution, climate change and harvesting of natural resources. Hence, in future coastal zones will not only suffer from pollution, habitat degradation, biodiversity losses, climate change, coastal erosion and marine management activities but their socio-economic and ecological functions are also at risk.

#### Integrated Coastal Zone Management as a vehicle for territorial cohesion

In an effort to minimise emerging conflict potential from the outset and allow for cooperative planning, the European Union initiated the so-called Integrated Coastal Zone Man-

agement (ICZM) as an instrument to implement territorial cohesion policies in the EU. Integrated coastal zone management is not intended to constitute an independent planning instrument based on legal provisions, but is rather a first holistic approach that takes into account marine areas, coastal zones, estuaries and adjoining areas with their major seaports. The need for such an approach was first put into words in June 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro. The action programme „Agenda 21“ adopted at the conference by more than 170 countries spells out development and environmental policy objectives for sustainable development worldwide. The same objectives for the Baltic Sea area are expressed in the local agenda Baltic 21.

In the context of the EU Water Framework Directive, for example, the Baltic Sea is viewed as a coastal water body to be considered as an integral „eco-region“. It was set up as a model region to create „a marine awareness“ as part of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

#### German National Strategy for Integrated Coastal Zone Management

On 22 March 2006 Germany adopted a National Strategy for Integrated Coastal Zone Management, thus implementing a corresponding recommendation of the EU Commission. The report on the implementation of the ICZM in Germany was presented to the Commission in December

2010. A wealth of measures to implement ICZM principles have been launched over the past few years at federal, Länder and local level as well as by environmental and nature conservation NGOs and industry. Harmonised measures and plans embracing different topics and involving different authorities require an intensive exchange of ideas and experience by all coastal area stakeholders. A stakeholder platform, the „Küsten-Kontor“, was set up during the initial phase of the project serving the cooperation of stakeholders across Länder borders with the aim of reconciling different use requirements and conservation interests. However, cooperation between the Federal and the Länder level on coastal issues must be put on a broader footing and harmonisation of legal mechanisms must be improved. Potential fields of an improved cooperation at this level are renewable energies, coastal protection and marine conservation in the face of climate change. The German government intends to install offshore wind farms with a capacity of 25,000 megawatts (MW) by 2030. It must be the aim to develop the Baltic Sea coastal area in a way which accommodates both economically forward looking and ecologically sustainable concepts. The EcoRegion INTERREG project aims at establishing an „eco-region“ in the Baltic Sea area in which the economy can develop while taking environmental and resource conservation requirements into account.

#### The sample of the ‚Greifswalder Bodden‘

A conflict persisted in the Greifswalder Bodden (Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania) between the development of aquatic sports interests and nature conservation requirements. The conflict was solved with the help of a development concept which designated in detail zones allowing or banning aquatic sports for a limited duration or all year around and areas to be set aside, also for a limited duration or all year around, for nature conservation and landscape management purposes. This zoning practice for coastal water stretches will be made legally binding in the updated development programme for Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. The integrated ICZM approach was also used in the development of concepts for the Wismar Bay and the Odra estuary (in particular in the areas Kleines Haff, the Peene river and Achterwasser).

#### General conditions on the German Baltic Sea coast – total length of coastline in Germany

3,700 km with 2005 km on the Baltic Sea (including Bodden water bodies and island coastlines).

Flood risk areas along the Baltic coast are all areas below an altitude of 3 m above sea level, and most of these areas are at present protected by dikes.

3.1 million people live in the German Baltic Sea coastal area. Economic assets in the area (real estate, infrastructure etc.) represent an amount of more than 500 billion euro and more than 1 million people work in the region. The Baltic Sea cities of Kiel, Lübeck, Rostock and Greifswald are under risk of being partially flooded due to a lack of protecting dikes. Tourism centres along the Baltic coast run the risk of losing their beaches, and expenditure for coastal defence measures are about to increase.



Integration along the German-Polish border



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**Meaning of territorial cohesion in a cross-border context**  
The notion of “territorial cohesion” has a rather diffuse and metaphoric character. The ongoing discussion reveals at least three, quite different, spatial dimensions of social and economic cohesion as main goal of the EU. The first dimension includes actions aiming at better accessibility to capitals (financial, human, intellectual, creative) within the territory of the EU. The second dimension includes all individual and collective activities improving “horizontal” contacts, cooperation and understanding between neighboring spatial entities (communes, regions, countries). The third dimension includes the “vertical” policies strengthening the internal capacities and potentials of spatial entities (communes, regions, countries). For transnational border areas the first and second dimensions of territorial cohesion are most relevant.

**Polish-German border**  
The German-Polish border along the rivers Odra/Oder and Nysa/Neisse is 456 km long. Since 1989 regions and cities which were partially divided in the period of the “cold war” laboriously try to grow together. The main common driving factor is the peripheral location within Poland and Germany, and the rather critical socio-economic situation (low GDP per capita, high unemployment, decline of manufacturing, high emigration rate). Cooperation is more intensive since 2000, and definitely since 2005 after the eastward extension of the EU. The bad internal and external accessibility of the German-Polish trans-border area is still a big chal-

lenge for national and EU spatial policy. The German state invested billions of Euros to improve the connections between the western part of the newly unified country and its eastern borderland (motorways, speedy railways, airports, seaports, telecommunication nets). A deciding factor was the establishment of the German capital in Berlin. The Polish side neglects this direction. There is an urgent need for motorways and fast railway connections between metropolises in western Poland (Szczecin, Poznań, Wrocław) and eastern Germany (Berlin, Dresden). The trans-border local communication systems around Szczecin and in the partner cities Frankfurt/Oder – Słubice, Görlitz – Zgorzelec should be improved and unified.

**Towards territorial cohesion along the German-Polish border**  
The strengthening of territorial cohesion along the Polish-German border is a concrete need evidenced by the tangible benefits of cross-border relations perceived at both sides of the border. The numerous existing and permanently emerging local and regional cooperative activities along the German-Polish border need a good political atmosphere rather than direct financial support. Common spatial planning, environmental protection, labor market issues, communal services, business environment, culture, education (including higher education, research and development) are the most relevant fields for fueling and building up territorial cohesion. The political initiative “Odra/Oder Partnership” provides a suitable framework for further cooperation and is



The German - Polish border © Jaroslaw Czochanski University of Gdańsk

an ideal partner for implementing the concept of territorial cohesion. The main systemic barrier to a more cohesive German-Polish border area is the low level of decentralization: insufficient competences and funds are transferred by the central (German and Polish) governments to the regional and local levels. Local barriers include cultural, economic and legal differences between Poland and Germany, but the majority of them are losing their importance. New possibilities for the future development of the German-Polish border are opened by the diffusion

of the English language and the fast economic growth of Poland and Europe. It is expected that in the future the territorial cohesion of the Polish-German border will be similar to the one e.g. of the German-Dutch border nowadays.



The combination of socio-economic and spatial planning in the Pomorskie Voivodship



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Office of the Marshal of the Pomorskie Voivodship



Jakub Pietruszewski  
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**Development of Pomorskie Voivodship**  
The Pomorskie Voivodeship is one of 16 regions of Poland. It has a population of 2,2 million people and an area of 18.000 km2. The main development pole is the Tricity agglomeration composed of Gdańsk, Sopot and Gdynia and their functional surroundings. When it comes to economical statistics it is not only one of the strongest regions in Poland but also one of the most diversified regions. This variety refers to the different economical conditions of particular gminas (communes), the different levels of population density, the existence of large urbanised areas, large forest areas, open green spaces and the existence of different ecosystems such as the coastal zone, the lake district, the delta of a river and large forests.  
The self-governed region of Pomorskie was established in 1998 as part of the territorial reform. It has its own government and regional Assembly, which were elected in direct elections. One of the main goals of the reform was to create strong regions able to run their own development policy and also to take part in shaping and implementing EU and national policies and strategies.  
The need to further improve territorial cohesion is expressed in key documents of the region. In these documents, territorial cohesion is mainly presented in its functional (polycentric concentration) and place-based (territorial capital) dimension. However, one can also find some "solidarity" features of cohesion in those territorial policies that target disadvantaged parts of the region.

**Territorial cohesion in the Development Strategy of the Pomorskie Voivodeship**  
The development strategy of 2005 establishes three main priorities. All of them relate to different scopes of territorial cohesion.  
Priority I. COMPETITIVENESS relates to the supraregional and international scope of cohesion. It aims at creating "a strong and sustainable position for the region in Europe by: stimulating enterprises, innovation and new technologies; establishing an active knowledge-based society; improving the region's attractiveness for settlement, investments and tourism". Two other priorities concentrate on rather domestic goals:  
Priority II. COHESION is intended to help the reduction of "the disparities within the region in the area of social, economic and spatial development" and  
Priority III. ACCESSIBILITY is to "ensure the mobility of people, access to services, efficiently safe transfer of goods, information, knowledge and energy through developed infrastructure, which respects the environmental assets".

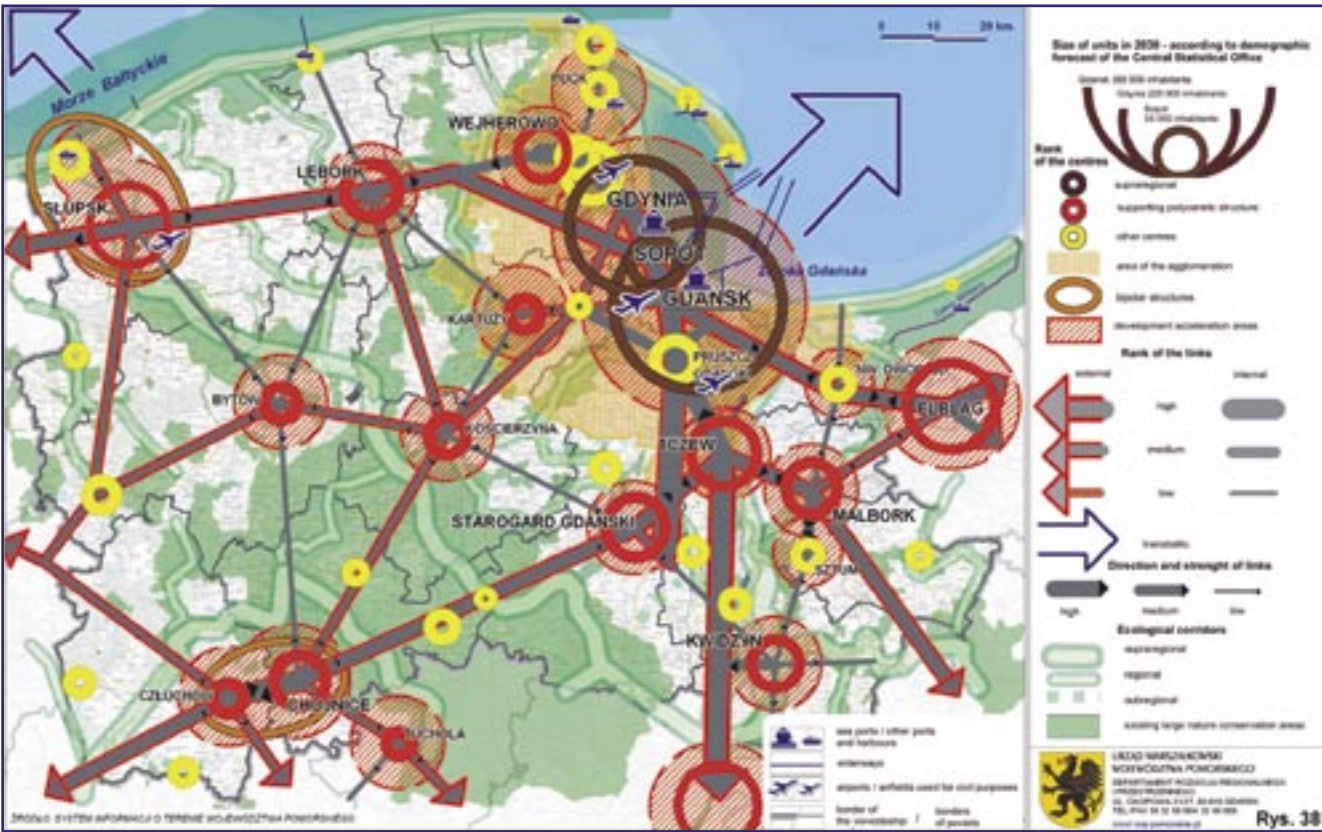
**Territorial cohesion in the Spatial Development Plan of the Pomorskie Voivodeship**  
The regional spatial development plan of 2009 creates a spatially oriented, more detailed framework for the Strategy and relates to the strategy priorities. The main general objective of spatial development of the region is "Shaping a harmonious functional-spatial structure of the voivodeship – creating favourable conditions for balancing utilization of spatial qualities, values and

resources with economic growth, higher standard and quality of life and permanent preservation of natural environmental values for present and future generations". There is also a strategic goal for the area of the Tricity agglomeration: "to ensure, through the use of unique costal features, a permanent and sustainable development of the Tricity agglomeration due to its increased economic competitiveness in the Baltic region, and at the same time establishing high quality of living standards and natural environment". These goals are to be achieved by a development model based on moderate polycentric concentration.

Such model shall be composed of:

- **The Tricity agglomeration** (Gdańsk, Gdynia and Sopot) as one of the socio-economic growth centres with Europe-wide significance, which in light of international competitiveness will constitute an increasingly dynamic centre that combines metropolitan functions, economic activity and innovative potential.
- **A polycentric network connecting those centres that for historical and political reasons require external support for countering the marginalization process.** These centres may include the two bipolar systems: Słupsk along with Ustka on one side, and Chojnice with Człuchów plus Tczew, Starogard Gdański, Wejherowo, Kwidzyn, Malbork, Łębork, Kościerzyna, and Bytów on the other.

It is expected that centres and zones shaped by market processes and by the voivodeship self-governmental policy will become major links for energising the voivodeship's development. Not only will Tricity become more competitive in the Baltic Sea Region but also medium-sized towns and zones will be supported by new infrastructures and public services and build a coherent network supporting Tricity's national and international competitiveness.



The model of the functional-spatial structure – supporting sustainable development  
Source: Spatial development Plan for Pomorskie Voivodeship © Pomorskie Voivodeship



Voluntary coordination of policies with territorial impact in the region of southern Småland



Maria Persdotter  
Strategic planning  
City of Växjö

Ensuring an harmonious development of Southern Småland

Kronoberg is one of three counties in Småland. Unemployment is traditionally low in southern Småland, average life expectancy somewhat higher and the number of unhealthy people is lower here than in the rest of Sweden.

Territorial cohesion (TC) for the region of southern Småland is about ensuring the harmonious development of all territories in the region of southern Småland (Ljungby, Markaryd, Älmhult, Alvesta, Uppvidinge, Lessebo, Tingsryd, Växjö). It is also about making sure that the citizens will be able to take advantage of the characteristics of these territories, hence transforming the diversity of the different municipalities into an asset that contributes to sustainable development of the entire region.

The Regional Council of Southern Småland is an arena for regional development work and can be seen as the responsible organization for territorial cohesion on a regional level. Its mission is to strengthen cooperation at a regional level and work for development and sustainable growth in the region. The Regional Council of Southern Småland is a joint organization for county municipalities and county council with the aim of utilizing possibilities, and promoting development, in the county of Kronoberg. It is also the responsible authority for transport in the county of Kronoberg.

Climate Change and governance issues

In 2007 the municipality of Växjö started a local Climate Commission as climate change was identified as one of the most important challenges for EU spatial development in the Territorial Agenda of the EU. The commission had the task to identify actions that would turn Växjö into a fossil fuel free city. The commission consisted of representatives from the policy level, city administration, Växjö University, Växjö Energy Ltd, Energy Agency for Southeast Sweden, and companies. In 2009 the Regional Council of Southern Småland took over the lead of the climate commission. The purpose of the regional Climate Commission is now to propose measures to achieve the goal of becoming a fossil fuel free region. This is perceived as a territorial asset of the region for long term development. Also, the Commission will present suggestions for changes in strategy and goals to achieve environmentally sustainable growth. The vision is to become the greenest region in Europe.

Functional cooperation beyond municipal borders

The County Administration of Kronoberg has developed a network of city administrations responsible for environmental work at local level. The network has now existed for about two years and consists of six of the eight municipalities in the county. The purpose is to facilitate the dissemination of experiences, highlight key areas for action and cooperation, both between municipalities but also between the local and regional levels. Some of the is-

issues discussed during network meetings are the certification of sewage sludge, logistic issues related to locally produced and organic food, public transport, etc. This illustrates how the functional definition of TC can be implemented in practice and how functional regions are formed for different purposes.

Functional features of TC can also be seen in the County Administration of Kronoberg's work on coordination of local management before, during and after a crisis. The Administration organized emergency management system operators under the name "Emergency Cooperation Kronoberg". The Emergency Cooperation of Kronoberg consists of representatives from local governments and their emergency services, the County Council, police and SOS Alarm to name a few. There are a

number of sub-groups working on specific issues like staff and management, emergency support, radio communications, risk and vulnerability assessment, and climate adaptation. An important part of interaction is the knowledge to be shared between organizations and their collective learning after a crisis.

There are many benefits of participating in various networks implementing territorial cohesion. One of the most important outcomes is the opportunity of knowledge exchange. The above instances are only a few of the examples of collaboration taking place in the region of southern Småland. Moreover, both the County Administration of Kronoberg and the Municipality of Växjö are working on TC within various initiatives on national and international level.



Map of Kronoberg, northern Europe © Regional Council of Southern Småland

Forests as endogenous development potential in the region of Soltau-Fallingbostel



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**Forests as an important part of regional capital**  
Territorial cohesion (TC) as described in the EU Green Book (CEC 2008) redirects development policies towards better exploiting regional potential and territorial capital in line with the Barca (2009) report and Territorial Agenda of the EU (2007). The keywords of this approach are territorial capital and policy integration. A region's territorial capital is distinct from other areas and is determined by many factors (which) may include geographical location, size, factor of production endowment, climate, traditions, and natural resources. In Soltau-Fallingbostel (SFA)<sup>1</sup>, forests form important part of the region's territorial capital. The share of forests of the SFA territory is app. 31%, which is considerably higher than in the agriculturally dominated Federal State of Lower Saxony (20%). Private land owners form the majority of the forest area. The volume of standing timber in their forests amounts to up to roughly 6,25 million cubic meters, representing an enormous value for both the owners and the regional economy. Since "wood is growing on wood", private forests are a source of continuous income for their owners as well as the whole group of actors in the timber market chain such as harvesting contractors, carriers and the timber processing industry. Parallel to the commercial value of these forests, they fulfil, mostly without charge to the beneficiaries, a broad range of recreational and environmental functions and services.

**Integrated forest policy in Soltau-Fallingbostel**  
The forest policy used to be treated as sectoral one, integrated to some extend with nature conservation and demonstrating limited interactions with agriculture policy or spatial planning. This approach has been recently changed in Soltau-Fallingbostel in line with the notion of TC. Forest development is to be integrated into a broader array of regional policies and initiatives. Links between the forest sector, the County administration and other stakeholders will be identified and cooperative structures will be developed. Examples are the County's responsibilities for water-related issues in the context of irrigated stacks for storing damaged timber or specific environmental options for the restoration of the forest landscape after storm damages.

The starting point for such integration was given by climate change, which the forestry sector has been facing for several years. Though all consequences cannot be completely estimated at this stage, higher gradients of temperature will increase the frequency of high wind speed and storms, causing tree overturning and breakage. It has become clear, that this topic leads to many links with e.g. environmental issues, problems of regional transportation, impacts of spatial planning and others. The success of a storm damage emergency plan depends on stable organisational conditions, which can be activated at short notice for an efficient cooperation. Organisational sustainability will probably turn out to be a pre-condition for miti-



Location of the Soltau-Fallingbostel region  
© Alexander Rosenberg

gation of unpredictable occurrences like storm damages<sup>2</sup>.

**Integrating forests into regional economies in line with the territorial cohesion concept**  
The future prospects of forestry in SFA lie in strengthening its role as a developmental factor tightly integrated into the regional economy. On one hand this implies proper coordination of different policies affecting the territory of SFA in order to maintain forests as territorial capital of the region (with particular attention to climate change mitigation and adaptation policies). On the other hand the strengthening will induce changes in forestry itself towards higher valuation of the ecological and climate services of the forests, greater attention to the issue of forests fragmentation

and the need to safeguard "green" connectivity of the region and with its neighbours.

Territorial cohesion, with its focus on connectivity, functionality and policy coordination also offers new food for thought for forestry. TC will strengthen forestry's role in regional development and in safeguarding regional prosperity, long-term ecological stability and safety against natural and manmade hazards.

1 The region of Soltau-Fallingbostel (SFA) is located half way between the City of Hamburg and Hanover, the capital of the Federal State of Lower Saxony.  
2 After storm in 2005, tools for improved wind stability in forests were developed in the INTERREG North Sea project STORMRISK ([www.stormrisk.eu](http://www.stormrisk.eu)). These tools are continuously implemented in practical forest management. After the heavy storm event LOTHAR 1999, in South Germany a detailed storm management manual was developed.



Forest Area in the Soltau-Fallingbostel county © Alexander Rosenberg



Irrigated timber stack for conservation of storm-damaged wood © Alexander Rosenberg



Storm damage in forests © Alexander Rosenberg



Reforestation after logging of storm-damaged trees: an option for increased stand stability, improved biodiversity and changed landscape design. © Alexander Rosenberg



### Climate and Energy Programme for the cohesive development of Päijät-Häme Region



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Päijät-Häme

**Climate change in the context of territorial cohesion**  
One of the most important challenges for spatial development of the EU, identified in the Territorial Agenda of the EU, has been climate change. It has many territorial implications, e.g. making some areas more prone to natural hazards and therefore less suitable for settlement or business development purposes. It will also contribute to reallocation of many economic activities due to lack of water (desertification), changes in the existing ecosystems, need for greater energy intake and accessibility problems. Therefore, mitigation and adaptation to climate change is an important precondition for long-term development in the XXI century. The concept of territorial cohesion (TC) gives some useful hints on how to do that. **One of the most ambitious goals of TC is to promote the coherence of policies with a territorial impact, both horizontally and vertically.** Sectoral and general policies frequently do not consider or disregard territorial aspects and specifics, local and regional policies, programmes and development decisions. Therefore, there is a need to coordinate or treat in a holistic way all sectoral policies influencing a given territory. **One of such integrative frameworks must be the mitigation and adaptation to climate change. It should be based on coordination of many policies to mention only spatial policy, urban development policy, forestry, transport policy, water management and many others.** It is

clear that such efforts also require the cooperation of neighbouring municipalities. In the nearest future the existence of climate policies and programmes will constitute an important developmental advantage for a given territory in securing a long-term development path.

**Päijät-Häme Climate and Energy Programme**  
The 11 municipalities that constitute the Region of Päijät-Häme have decided to tackle the issue of climate change by developing a joint Climate and Energy Programme. The Regional Council of Päijät-Häme is working on the Programme in close cooperation with municipalities and other relevant actors in the region. The reductions in greenhouse gas emissions will be achieved by focusing on energy production and consumption, transportation, industry, as well as forestry and agriculture. Although it focuses mostly on mitigation, the Programme also deals with adaptation issues. By reducing general vulnerability of its vital systems, Päijät-Häme is better prepared for direct and indirect consequences of climate change. In practice this means diversifying and improving self-sufficiency in the region's food and energy supply, for example. More detailed adaptation strategies for specific consequences of climate change are beyond the scope of the Climate and Energy Programme and thus an issue Päijät-Häme has to address in the near future.

**Working together**

Extensive participation is used when climate and energy policies are defined. The Programme involves not only experts of different fields but also those whose actions matter at the end of the day: municipal officials, private companies and ordinary people. There are a number of climate change mitigation activities already going on in Päijät-Häme that are independent of the regional Climate and Energy Programme. One such activity is the Climate Programme of Päijät-Häme's central city, Lahti, and its two neighboring municipalities

of Hollola and Nastola. Lahti and Nastola are committed to an ambitious goal of reducing municipalities' greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent from the 1990 level by the year 2025. The role of the Päijät-Häme Climate and Energy Programme is to involve the municipalities and organisations that have yet to be active in climate matters. The Programme also deals with region-wide issues such as regional land use planning and regional public transportation. Lastly, the goal is to enhance the coherence of existing climate change mitigation activities in the region.



The region of Päijät-Häme is located in the heart of southern Finland © Maaret Monola



City of Lahti in evening light © Lahti Region image bank

The special case of Kaliningrad: the challenge of achieving cohesion within, with the Baltic Sea Region as well as with Russia



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Cohesion agenda in Kaliningrad region

For the Kaliningrad region of Russia, as an exclave, territorial cohesion means the inter-relation of three aspects: cohesion with other regions of Russia, cohesion within the BSR, and internal cohesion within the region. In the Kaliningrad region, the strategic framework of territorial cohesion issues is determined by the Strategy of socio-economic development of Kaliningrad region in mid- and long-terms (2006), the Program of socio-economic development of Kaliningrad region 2006-2016, and the spatial development scheme of Kaliningrad region up to 2030. In accordance with these, the strategic cohesion agenda is aimed at achievement of living standards and environmental quality measures similar to those of neighboring countries; promotion of sufficient competitiveness of the Kaliningrad region in the BSR; and organization of effective governance in regional development.

In spatial terms, the strategy will be achieved by means of:

- Promotion of cross border cooperation with BSR countries
- Formation of a sustainable regional system of settlement
- Enhancement of living standards in peripheral regions, including diversification of the economic profile of small cities
- Creation of a sustainable environmental network
- Development of regional tourism infrastructure integrated into the BSR tourism network
- Creation of an effective system of anthropogenic contamination prevention for lagoons and coastal zones
- Enhancement of transport infrastructure and its environmental friendliness
- Promotion of security of the energy supply
- Enhancement of the public service system and housing development

Contribution of municipalities

In accordance with the rules of self-government, local strategies shall further elaborate and concretize the above-described regional policy on socio-economic development and cohesion. The problem is that due to administrative reforms (2004), the current spatial structure of Kaliningrad region was put in place in 2009 and only recently became operational. Moreover, in accordance with the administrative reform, the main responsibilities on territorial development were assigned to local governments, causing discontinuity of spatial policies from local to regional level. This in turn significantly lowers the overall effectiveness of territorial cohesion policy.

Origin of the concept of territorial cohesion in Russia

From a theoretical point of view, the idea of territorial cohesion is not new in Russia. The background of its ideology goes back to Soviet times, relating to the so-called “shared system of settlement concept” (1971).

The concept is based on principles of vertical hierarchy and horizontal interconnection of settlements of different sizes, sharing their specialization and functions in accordance with their range in the system of settlement. Formation and functioning of the shared system of settlement focuses on ensuring availability of basic services to the population, reducing the isolation of less developed and peripheral areas and increasing their competitiveness, and promoting dynamic and sustainable regional development. However, in practice planners have held on to the opinion that stimulation of the “poles of growth” is more cost-effective (because average growth rate index would be higher), while part of the added value could be reallocated to less developed areas. Unfortunately these development stimuli lacked proper financial support, in particular for policies dealing with peripheral areas. The result was an increased center-periphery disparity.

Territorial cohesion in the Landscape Programme of Kaliningrad region

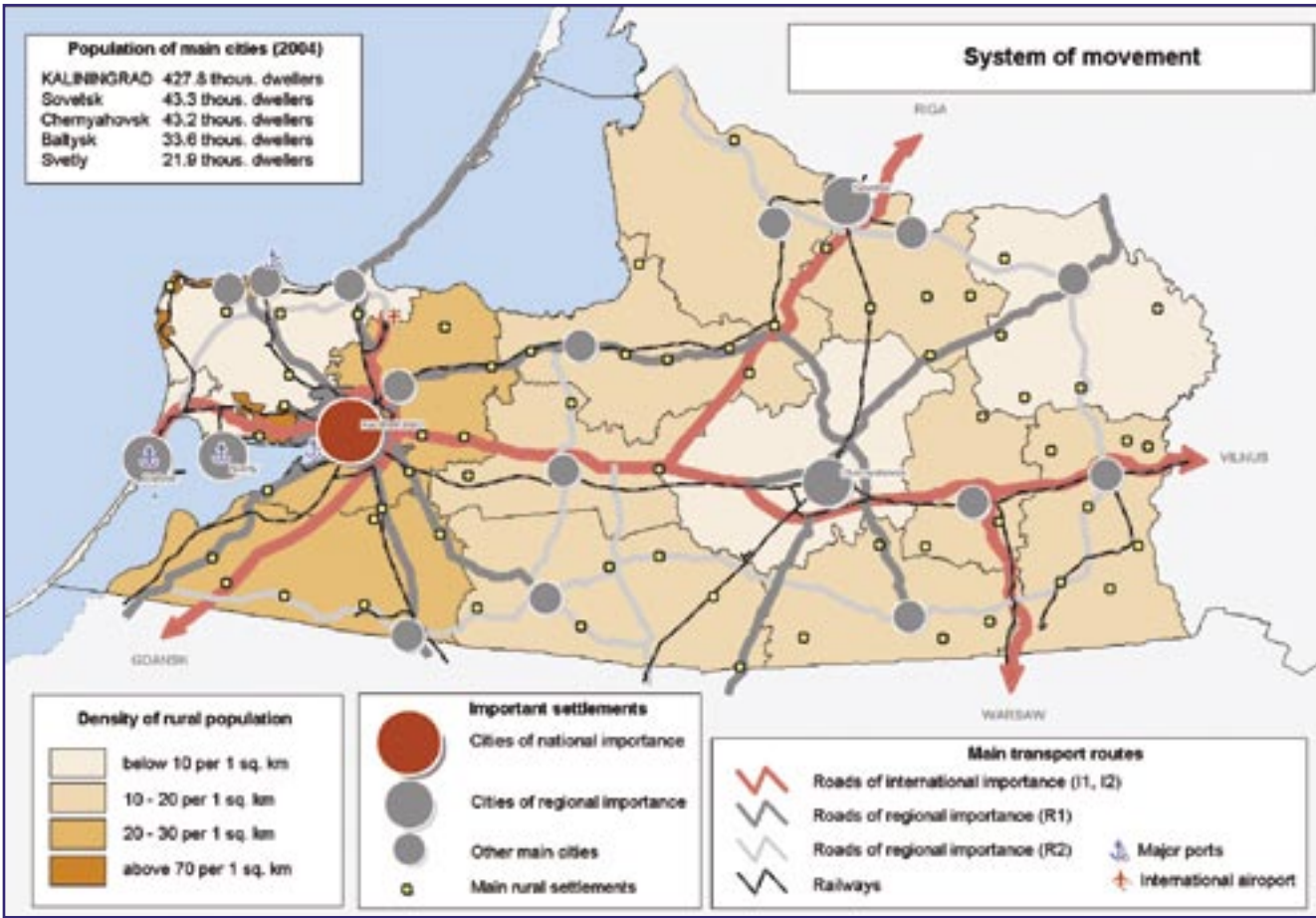
During the last two decades the concept has been adapted according to current challenges of regional development, transition to a market economy and administrative reforms. In the Kaliningrad region this adaptation process is mainly related

to translating EU-member countries’ experiences to the Russian strategy for regional development. In this context, an important step forward was the development of the Landscape Program of Kaliningrad region (2005) together with the Berlin Technical University (Germany). The document was commissioned by the Kaliningrad region administration with the aim to better manage the territory and promote territorial cohesion in a more sustainable way. Furthermore, the Interreg IIIB “East West Window” project (2007-2008) supported the introduction of an urban-rural partnership approach into

the planning reality of the region. However, implementation of these findings faces various legislative, institutional, and economic obstacles. Notwithstanding the strategic significance of the issue, the Kaliningrad region is still poorly integrated in the EU spatial development framework (i.e. VASAB initiatives) and spatial schemes of cross-border development are not yet in place. At the same time, the internal territorial cohesion policy has to face the difficulties of the transition period, demographic dynamics, transit problems, and geopolitics.



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Key elements of the settlement system of Kaliningrad region © N.Klimenko, G. Fedorov



Urban-Rural Partnerships for utilizing territorial potentials and linkages – a German case



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The essence of urban-rural partnership

Urban-rural partnerships are an important way to achieve territorial cohesion with focus on networking and formation of functional regions. They can bring together different types of regions – not only urban and rural ones – also central and peripheral, as well as economically strong and weak ones. The idea is that all regions contribute with their specific potentials to the development of the partnership and that, vice versa, all regions benefit from this development.

The term urban-rural partnership may open more questions than answers. Urban and rural areas are often differently defined. Sometimes, there is even no shared view of urban and rural within individual countries. Furthermore, the term partnership can have several meanings. What are the constitutional elements of a partnership – a legal basis, financial obligations, simply good will? Anyhow, urban-rural partnerships may be regarded as a flexible topic, thus one definition may be: A form of cooperation – with ties of varying strength – between different kinds of (sub-) regions with the explicit aim of exploiting their potentials and linkages for the benefit of the whole region.

A German demonstration project

Based on the Territorial Agenda of the EU (2007) and the Concepts and Strategies for Spatial Development in Germany of 2006, the German federal level initiated a demonstration project with the aim to find ways of building urban-rural part-

nerships on this topic. Its objective was to find out whether urban-rural partnerships are an adequate tool and may work as a strategy. Therefore, projects in the regions were initiated so that cooperation between the regions could be experienced, and this could lead eventually to a governance structure.

The project started with a call and the response was overwhelming, as some 60 regions reacted. Then, seven demonstration regions (six existing metropolitan regions and the Lake of Constance as one cross-border model region) with about 40 measurements were selected. These seven demonstration regions covered 52 % of the German territory and 48 % of Germany's population and are thus really large scale in character. The regions started their work at the beginning of 2008 and the first phase ended in summer 2010. The variety of projects was very broad: regional chains of value added, clusters and networks (even the networking of networks), joint spatial development plans, transport, tourism, marketing and a better positioning of rural areas in these partnerships – showing that urban-rural partnerships have many facets.

To mention one example, in Nürnberg, the project to strengthen regional chains of value added had one successful result: the canteen of the Siemens company in Nürnberg now buys annually about 4 Mio EUR of food products from the regional agricultural sector. Both, the urban consumers and the rural suppliers benefit from this urban-rural partnership.



Seven model regions in Germany bring urban-rural partnerships into action through various projects © BBSR

The demonstration project was successful. It showed that urban-rural partnerships are possible and that the work on concrete projects may pave the way for this kind of a functional cooperation. But some key factors are responsible for success: a shared agenda or defined goals among the actors, motivated actors and projects which incorporate many actors – i.e., people and their

engagement are basic. Furthermore, political attention is beneficial and can promote this idea.

Coordinated development of the Riga region



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Regional cooperation as a core element of territorial cohesion

According to Latvia's Position on the European Commission's Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion (CEC 2008) territorial cohesion stands for „horizontal guidelines for sustainable and coordinated development of all EU regions oriented towards provision of equal standards of quality of life and access to the basic services for citizens by paying special attention to the less developed regions to enhance their competitiveness”. An essential and indispensable element of territorial cohesion is regional or territorial cooperation, which contributes to reducing isolation and promoting integration of weaker areas, ensuring a dynamic and sustainable development and promoting joint strategies and fund raising.

Strategic planning in Riga

The Riga long-term development strategy for the year 2025 and the Riga development program 2006 define the city's priority development objectives and tasks. In the Riga Spatial Plan 2006-2012 these objectives and tasks are translated into spatial conditions, defining joint programming of areas both in Riga and in the neighbouring local governments: e.g. motorways of the city's international airport and their noise areas, forests and conservation areas, drinking water extraction points, as well as areas reserved to sustainable waste management. The Riga City Council adopted these documents at the end of 2005. A monitoring system for the long-term develop-

ment strategy was developed to enable politicians to evaluate developments and optimize the work of the municipality. The system collects available data on the economic and social processes, which allows cities to assess progress in achieving their objectives.

Transport planning for territorial cohesion

One of the most important aspects of territorial cohesion in Riga is the optimization of traffic flow and access to public transport. It is planned for the Riga low-floor tram to be completed in 2011, offering transportation that is environmentally friendly and accessible to the public. It is also planned to extend the tramline outside the city to the city's international airport and further eastwards to connect the neighbouring territories to the city. This tram will become a backbone of the Riga functional region. Over the years the total length of bicycle paths in Riga has also been extended, giving people an alternative to road use in the city and in the neighbouring municipalities and thereby contributing to better internal connectivity of the Riga functional region. The traffic flow and congestion has been reduced by a bridge in the southern part of the city, which was opened in the year 2008.

Northern Transport Corridor initiative

Since 2005 Riga is implementing the Northern Transport Corridor project with the aim to reduce transport pressures on the centre of Riga, to



Areas of common planning interests for Riga city and the neighbouring municipalities. © Riga City Council, City Development Department, 2005

include Latvian ports into the road network and increase the East - West transport corridor competitiveness.

From the point of view of financial scale and technical complexity, the approximately 30 km long Riga Northern Transport Corridor is an unprecedented Latvian project that will strengthen the Metropolitan region of Riga and the whole Baltic rim and will contribute to the economic development of the Riga functional region.

The functional region around Riga

A special webpage developed within Neighbourhood project supports the polycentric city development; it strengthens the identity of Riga neighbourhoods and enhances communication and participation in the planning process. The project aims at defining neighbourhoods, at supporting the implementation of sustainable socio-economic and spatial policies and at improving urban development planning processes as well as the quality of life. Neighbourhoods are not just considered as administrative units, but the information collected on neighbourhoods will contribute to the sustainable development of the Riga functional urban area as well as to increase interest in the development of joint investment policies. Last but not least, the Mobility Plan for Riga and Pieriga should be mentioned in this context. The Plan has just been finalized and is now waiting for government approval.



Neighborhoods of Riga © Riga City Council, City Development Department, 2008



Riga Northern Transport Corridor © Riga City Council, City Development Department, 2009



## Territorial assets in urban planning – examples from Polish cities



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Territorial cohesion (TC) is a very complex idea, still vague and not operationalised (see e.g. Böhme & Eser; Salamin & Zaucha in this issue). Seen from the perspective of the EU cohesion policy - TC is just the territorial dimension of the cohesion policy and a more effective way to implement it in the more diversified EU context (at present composed of 268 regions). On the other hand, this perspective seems to water down the basic meaning of TC used so far: the (improved) spatial accessibility of peripheral regions to higher services and development centres.

One of the most important policy fields of TC is the spatial development of cities. Urban planning could enhance TC by better addressing tools and measures to specific geographic situations and local community preferences, more actively coordinating different policies, creating city networks and urban-rural partnerships. This would contribute to:

- promoting competitiveness and sustainability of economic potential of cities and their regions, especially in rural or remote areas;
- combating social exclusion in deprived urban neighborhoods (also in parts of metropolitan areas);
- improving access (also from the city's region) to employment and housing opportunities, education, health care and other services of general interests;
- and controlling the management of landscape and spatial resources, especially in the suburban fringe.

### Polish urban policy

At the national level urban policy is only emerging now, despite the well-conceptualized spatial development of the country. Regional spatial development plans comprise some guidelines for developing urban networks and solving issues like revitalization, but mostly the plans are used as reference for local planning documents and regional development programmes, supported by EU structural funds. They have a slightly bigger role in guiding regional authorities' decisions on development issues, which are under their competencies (e.g. trunk roads of regional significance, spatial development of special interest areas). Most of the spatial decisions are taken, however, at the local level. Urban planning in Poland was considered to be rather progressive in the last decades, now it seems that it is only hardly adopting new European trends. Its legal framework doesn't allow for much, on the other hand planners have to operate under strong pressures from the developers' side.

Nevertheless, a few examples of successful contribution of urban planning to TC at different levels can be pointed out. Most of them refer to middle sized and even smaller cities or towns and are related to TC with a view to its place-based and functional dimension.

### Place-based territorial cohesion – the case of the city of Tczew

The city of Tczew uses the Vistula River - the country's natural and cultural icon – as a developmental as-

set. For the last ten years Tczew has been implementing the programme „Come back to the Vistula”, which aims at improving the use of the river and its surroundings by:

- adapting former industrial buildings to presents needs: a Regional Centre, a Vistula River Museum, and spaces for conferences and workshops were created;
- creating facilities for the new Vistula River Waterfront;
- promoting the complex (in social and physical terms) revitalization of the Old Town area, transforming it into an attractive leisure and cultural centre, connecting the area with other parts of the city especially with Vistula embankments, via cycling routes, and by using modern technologies (e.g. electric bicycles).

In Kwidzyn, a small city on the Lower Vistula River, some initiatives were implemented to link activities of strong industrial companies with a clever support to NGOs and higher education institutions. As a result social integration and local entrepreneurship were successfully strengthened.

### Functional territorial cohesion - regional cases

Besides the contribution of urban policy making to TC, it is also worth mentioning plans and project activities implemented at the regional level and/or in the form of inter-municipal networks, e.g.:

1. The urban policy of the Kujawsko pomorskie region is unique in Poland. It aims to support the develop-

ment of a policentric urban settlement system with a special focus on the bi-centered metropolitan area of Bydgoszcz and Toruń. The policy was reformulated in a detailed strategy in the framework of Interreg cooperation with other BSR cities. Furthermore, a spatial action plan was agreed among major cities and municipalities which covers e.g. the concept of the metropolitan railway.

2. The Amber Road Cities Association created an extensive cooperation network on the initiative of the city of Gdynia. It has the aim to support the creation of a motorway linking the Baltic Sea region (Norway and Sweden) with the Adriatic Coast. The Association, partly in cooperation with other cities, developed a number of studies, workshops and detailed project concepts for spatial development. This will result in the spatial development coordination of the whole VI TEN-T Corridor and in a development asset for each of the networking cities.

3. There are several cities and towns along the lower sections of Warta and Vistula rivers involved in cooperation projects, which all aim at increasing accessibility via water transport and at the spatial development of their areas in connection with international water tourism along the inland waterway.



The new Vistula River waterfront in Tczew, Poland  
© Tczew city administration



The new Vistula River waterfront in Tczew, Poland  
© Tczew city administration

## Logistic valley as a functional, sub-regional zone in Northern Poland



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Territorial cohesion has been debated in the EU since the beginning of the 1990s.

A number of scientific papers have been dedicated to this issue (e.g. Dühr at al 2010, 390-1; Baucz, Łotocka, Żuber 2009; ESPON 2004). There are nowadays basically four or five main interpretations of the notion of territorial cohesion, which are widely accepted (cf. Szlachta, Böhme and Eser and Dühr in this issue). Of critical importance at the local level is the creation of functional areas exceeding administrative boundaries. This aspect of territorial cohesion has been strongly emphasized in the Polish Spatial Development Concept (see Zaucha in this issue).

### Logistic Valley as an example of multi-level governance in functional areas

A good example of synergies between multi-level governance and functional approach in the implementation of territorial cohesion is the establishment of a Sub-regional Functional Zone in northern Poland called Logistic Valley. It was established by the cities of Gdynia, Rumia, Reda and Wejherowo, by the municipalities of Kosakowo and Wejherowo, and by the Society of Polish Town Planners (Towarzystwo Urbanistów Polskich Oddział Gdańsk). The starting point was the issue of spatial distribution of benefits that could originate from a better organization of the surrounding area of the Port of Gdynia in order to support port development.

The primary goal for the newly created Logistic Valley is a comprehensive and integrated development of the technical infrastructure, which is

substantial for economical innovation and development of settlements in the area, as well as the improvement of logistics and the growth of the industrial park.

An agreement on the establishment of the Logistic Valley was signed on October 27th, 2010. As a result of this agreement a functional zone was established, which also covers a few other municipalities since the city of Gdynia alone does not have enough suitable areas. The establishment of the Logistic Valley shall facilitate the creation of new jobs, which is of great importance for the participating municipalities after the recent closure of the Gdynia Shipyard, one of the primary employers in the region. Experts anticipate that new jobs shall be created not only in the logistic sector, but also in industries creating added value services for the goods handled by the Gdynia harbour. The experience of the Logistic Valley shows<sup>1</sup> that the increasing complexity in the dynamics of supply chains encourages the creation of services that transcend transport, turnover and pure store-keeping of goods.

The Logistic Valley is expected to become an economic node for the A1 motorway heading from Gdynia southward and for the motorway on the sea connecting Gdynia and Scandinavia. The participating municipalities will jointly manage the Logistic Valley by way of an enterprise or a municipal association. It shall promote the growth of all businesses operating in the area of the Gdynia harbour.



The Logistic Valley (in yellow the functional area, in orange the development area) © SoNorA Project

## Nature heritage improves Kuldīga's citizens' prosperity

One of the key features of territorial cohesion is integration of different policies affecting a given territory. Such an approach has been used since 2007 for the development of the specially protected nature territory „Ventas ieleja” (Venta River Valley) within the territory of Kuldīga town in Latvia. The main idea was integration and promotion of nature conservation, tourism, public awareness and economic development to ensure the development of eco-tourism in line with the territory management plan, national and international regulations, thus promoting environmental education and awareness.

The most significant results were the following:

- Adjustment of tourism flows and thus decrease of damage to nature and sensitive biotopes (by moving pressures to the territories outside

the arranged nature trails, which are furnished with recreation infrastructure according to nature protection requirements);

- Increased interest on “Ventas ieleja” (increase in number of tourists by 20%);
- Increase in the environmental education level and public awareness: citizens of the town (13700) and district (38000) have obtained additional information on the territory and its nature values, school excursions have been organized;
- Demarcation of protected area boundaries;
- 10% reduction of poaching by using watchtower facilities.

The Kuldīga case is a good example of integrative management and development of specially protected nature areas within the town borders.



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Venta Valley Landscape Design  
© Kuldīga town municipality



## A window of opportunity: integrating transport into socio-economic and spatial planning



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### Transport planning for territorial cohesion

The new European policy on territorial cohesion provides tools for integrating sectors in new and harmonious ways. The launching of the new planning policy has inspired commentary about the way in which transport issues can play a role together with social and territorial cohesion through proper spatial planning.

One of the goals of the policy is to spur socio-economic development by enhancing formation of functional regions and simultaneously to mitigate social divide. Transport can make a difference because it is about connectivity, access and physical mobility. From the point of view of transport and territorial cohesion the issue of social cohesion is a complex undertaking since it is about development of the community life of diverse social groups and their income, preferences, practices, but also planning for diversity in gender, age, ethnicity, culture, religion and so on.

### Functionality in the territorial context

So far many European countries and cities have favoured the development of specialized zones and economic growth. Currently, some low-income areas in Europe provide services and production that is consumed in high-income areas and hence they are transported long distances. Furthermore we also find that when families get wealthier they opt for a modern and suburban lifestyle that includes more time on the roads and

a rise in the use of transport energy. It can be said that modern mass motorization means that people commute more and that both length and number of travels are increasing. Travels to workplaces, education, public services and to social activities are increasing. In order to build on community life such trends need to be reversed by means of functional regions. In this case, functionality means merging different functions into one functional and cohesive system in which social, environmental and economic concerns are taken together.

### Planning for heterogenic land use

This can be done by means of planning for heterogenic land-use, a socio-economic mix and proximity for the citizens. Such planning improves the conditions for social networking and business development and it decreases distances between areas for low-income versus high-income families, different ethnic or religious groups and so on. In this way territorial diversity turns into strength, in line with the concept of territorial cohesion.

The spatial form of towns and cities together with existing roads and transport networks such as rail are determining factors for possibilities to lessen divide and increase social cohesion, and also to lower emissions of greenhouse gases and other negative consequences of mass motorization. To increase sustainable development, the reduction of emissions is another important political goal in Europe.

### Integrating transport into spatial and socio-economic planning

The new policy is well-received and seen as an opening of a window of opportunity because it makes it possible to increase integration of transport, spatial and social aspects in planning both in cities and rural areas. Such planning can reduce the impact of transport on the human and natural environment.

In transport, a shift from stressing mass motorization to strengthening the role of public transport and non-motorized means of mobility is slowly taking place. One of the reasons for this is that the source of energy to drive the growing fleet of motor vehicles is far from being solved. Another aspect of a future low-impact mobility paradigm is the seamless transport system that has a positive effect on socio-economic develop-

ment and social cohesion. In contrast to cities with empty downtowns deprived of their initial functions, cities with a mix of cars, bicycles and pedestrians provide a more save and a secure environment. From the point of view of social cohesion non-motorised and public transport should be a priority.

A low impact mobility paradigm presupposes planning that integrates the diverse travel demand of European families in which mix of land use plays an important role. Today, with the new European Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion an integrated planning that realizes such vision is possible. Of course it requires political efforts to make it come true by means of collective ways of travelling and transport networks that increase human connectivity also in rural-urban relations.



The city of Skopje, Macedonia © Marie Thynell, 2009

### From coal & steel community to green energy solidarity



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**Renewable energy as territorial asset**  
The essence of territorial cohesion is in better exploiting regional potential and territorial capital. In recent years, due to climate change and volatility of fossil fuels prices, one of the most important territorial assets has become the ability to produce energy from renewable sources. Almost sixty years ago European integration started on the notion that binding together European coal and steel resources would lead to a peaceful and prosperous future.

Now, five of the original six countries founding the European Coal and Steel Community (Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg) are planning together with Denmark, Ireland, Great Britain and Sweden how to produce wind energy on the sea. Part of the issue is a connectivity challenge, i.e. how to create a super grid to connect windmill parks in order to allow trade of surpluses and deficits (resulting from natural changes in the wind conditions) and ensure stability of the whole system.



A proposed European Supergrid joined through the DESERTEC concept: a series of solar power plants in Middle Eastern and North African countries © DESERTEC Foundation

#### Supergrid

Supergrid is a visionary and unprecedented development within the Pan-European framework, which could solve many problems. Firstly, it would help to better utilize the potential of the wind, which is abundant in the North. Secondly, it would help to shift energy generation from on-land wind farms to vast off-shore farms as the land-based wind capacity will run out by 2020. Thirdly, the production is not the biggest obstacle in the green energy business. It is the transport that makes it economically inferior to traditional sources of energy. Thanks to its construction, the Supergrid will be more efficient than traditional cables. Fourthly, the Supergrid could transform the EU's job market, with the green energy sector having the potential to become a large employer and catalyst for national economies through its scale. UNEP predicts that by 2030 there will be 2.1 million people employed in wind energy and 6.3 million in solar energy.

#### Connectivity for green energy development

The Supergrid will not be a one-source but it can be a multi-source energy transmitter if developed EU wide. Development of wind, solar, geothermal and biomass will allow all the branches of the green energy industry and different regions of Europe to flourish. For example, binding solar power received from the Mediterranean region, geothermal power received from Iceland and Italy and wind power from Northern, Eastern and Central Europe is one of the biggest territorially cohesive projects in history. Due to its scale, the investment seems to overcome one of the biggest weaknesses of green energy - its unreliability. It is rather impossible for wind not to blow or sun not to shine over the whole of Europe at the same time. The community of wind, sun and biomass making use of territorial potentials is planned to secure our sustainable energy and make Europe a more sustainable place to live.



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## Tourism improves territorial cohesion



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The idea of territorial cohesion (TC) is honest and challenging although for the time being it is only defined as a framework concept (see „Green Paper on TC“ 2008).

TC is an intrinsic task of spatial planning – but of course spatial planning has to be supported by sectoral planning. Tourism can greatly assist the development of TC as this branch is always working cross-sectorally. The main tourism product – the travel of one person or of a group of them – consists of a chain of many single products and services and thus tourism connects several economic sectors: from transport to accommodation, local food supply, up to entertainment via for instance cultural events and information on traditions and history.

Regarding the ongoing discussion on TC, tourism fits well into two interpretations of TC.

### Better exploitation of regional potential and territorial capital by tourism

The success of tourism depends on the quality of attractions within destinations. Attractions may be natural (fresh air, beautiful beaches, large forests, etc.) or cultural (museums, historic buildings, cultural events, etc.). Of course there are differences with regard to natural and cultural tourism offers but the element of variety is not large in the Baltic Sea Region compared to worldwide attractions. Thus, the success of well-known destinations depends on an additional asset: a well working territorial and/or social capital. This might take different forms: it can be for instance an efficient structure for the cooperation of stakeholders and institutions (i.e. „triple helix“) or a solid milieu of creativity within which new tourism products develop faster and better than in other competing regions.



Häme Castle, Finland © National Board of Antiquities, Finland

Following this approach, TC focuses on spatially coherent areas. That can happen on all spatial levels: local, regional, national and even international. On each level, tourism can support economic and social development:

- On a local level - in particular in rural areas - tourism is a main factor for initiating and improving economic activities; it thereby supports the development of a corporate feeling amongst the population.
- On an international level, large areas such as the entire Baltic Sea Region can gain visibility on the global market by promoting the territory as one common tourism destination. Such marketing and branding tactics can be a small step towards a common Baltic Sea Region identity (examples of this are provided by the projects BaltMet <http://www.baltmet.org> and AGORA 2.0 <http://agora2-tourism.net>).

The choice of spatial level depends on the region to be promoted: the more distant the tourism regions are, the bigger the promotion activities that should be organized.

### TC by networking of specific tourism attractions

In addition to the cluster strategy, „thematic networking“ also contributes to the success of tourism on national and international levels. As single tourism facilities may not attract sufficient visitors, specific tourism attractions may be jointly promoted by an (inter) national network.

One of the most successful international networks regarding tourism attractions is „The Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea“ which operates since nearly 20 years (see <http://www.baltic-castles.org/portal/>). Another well-known example is the „European Route of Brick Gothic“, which connects 31 cities in 7 BSR countries (see <http://www.eurob.org/>), even though it is much younger and not yet so deeply rooted as a formal organisation.

Tourism may be a good way to bring attention to disadvantaged regions, as it contributes to public awareness raising. Subsidised tourism may be an instrument to support the implementation of TC, but it may not always be economically viable.

As a conclusion, two issues shall be underlined:

- Tourism and TC both follow the idea of supporting territories to make the best use of their assets.
- „Thematic networking“ has proven to be a very successful tool that also contributes to the harmonious development of the entire Baltic Sea Region.



Malbork Castle, Poland © Betina Meliss



Narva Castle, Estonia © Andres Toode



Skokloster Castle, Sweden © Jens Mohr

## Agricultural visions for backing territorial cohesion in the Baltic Sea Region



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### Integrated development of rural areas

The main challenge for territorial cohesion in the EU will be to reduce disparities in rural development, whilst continuing to contribute to a sustainable development of the entire European Union. Agriculture and the food business sector are the backbone of rural areas. About 80% of the actual food requirement in Germany is produced locally. Political strategies for rural areas, as envisaged by the TC concept, should be oriented to problems and actions rather than sectors because of regionally differentiated development processes and potentials (WBA 2006). The subsidiarity principle is fixed in the treaty of the foundation of the European Union. This means that political tasks should be

dealt with favourably on the lowest horizontal level (WBA 2006). Good and multi-layer governance, as proposed by the TC concept, is an acknowledged conceptual basis for controlling the analysis, evaluation and improvement of structures, mechanisms and processes, and co-operation (Magel and Franke 2008). In rural areas the protection of natural resources is of prime interest and implies for instance the conservation of unique landscapes and settlements, an unimpaired environment (soil, water, air) and local produce (Magel and Franke 2008). Rural clusters, cooperation between science and industry, regional management and combined efforts on communal level (territorial governance) are the backbone to achieve this ambitious goal. This is a functional approach to the development of rural areas.

### Vertical and horizontal coordination in Germany

In Germany, vertical and horizontal integration of political coordination is of prime significance as Federal and Federal State Government often share responsibilities for defined political areas (Magel and Franke 2008). However, OECD identified a lack of a defined, integrated strategy for the development of rural areas on all administrative levels and it identified a lack of organisational mechanisms on federal, federal state and communal level in Germany (Magel and Franke 2008) - and this despite the fact that the political principle calls

for a mandatory cooperation and legal demand for reconciliation.

### A vision for the development of rural areas

From the viewpoint of agricultural science the following visions for future developments are prognosed:

- **A diversification of food production.** Consumers will have the choice between authentic food and technologically modified products, which substitute meat. The shortfall of big animal enterprises will contribute to a significant reduction of nutrient losses to the environment and the release of climate relevant gases.
- The increase of local, organically produced foodstuff in the vicinity of urban areas under the constraints of peak oil and peak phosphorous as a measure to save natural resources and to deliver high-quality produce (Lee et al. 2008).
- The local implementation of cross-compliance. Organic growers will directly receive financial support by communities for flood prevention in development areas in the vicinity of rivers. It has been shown that the infiltration capacity of organic soils is about twice as high as that of conventional soils (Schnug et al. 2006).

## Model landscapes as tools for territorial cohesion

### Biological diversity as territorial asset

For territorial cohesion there is a big need in society to create sustainable processes and transforming social, economical and biological diversity into an asset for regions at different geographical levels. To succeed one has to work closely together with many different stakeholder groups. The interest to participate among local people, such as land-owners, tends to decrease with a growing geographical scale, while interest among representatives from i.e. NGOs and authorities instead often increases going from local to regional levels.

### Landscape approach to territorial cohesion

Different challenges in today's society (climate change, losses of ecosystem services, urbanization, etc.) can be found at different scales. For example carbon dioxide levels are most relevant to address at a global scale while biodiversity could be addressed at a very local to even a macro-regional level. A landscape is a relatively large area (ranging from i.e. 500-250 000 ha) for which borders could be defined by looking into the most relevant stakeholder groups and the most important processes. Using this way to think, define and work is called "landscape approach", or "ecosystem based management". Building capacity and knowledge to be able to handle conflicts and challenges takes time and engage-

ment among many organizations. It is therefore necessary to put more effort into some landscapes, in this article referred to as "model landscapes". The work that is done in model landscapes will ultimately not only bring knowledge and sustainable practices to the area itself, it could also work as important model-spreading experience to larger regions like rings on a water surface. Every landscape is unique and future challenges will demand unique solutions. There seems though to be some common aspects to be found in the most successful examples of model landscapes. Successful model landscapes are often "bridging organizations", able to bring people together from different levels – such as Sami villages from the very local level to policy makers at an international scale. They are also successful in bridging different sectors (for example forest, agriculture, tourism, education and transportation) and bringing together scientific and local traditional knowledge. A good example of this could be the developing Forest and Water initiative with a strong connection to the EU Baltic Sea Strategy.

### Biosphere Reserves and Model Forest as vehicles for territorial cohesion

Many different projects and concepts exist which are trying to accomplish the above described challenges. They all have different origins, missions and capacities. Only two concepts for developing model



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The village of Röttle in the Biosphere Reserve candidate area “Eastern Slopes of Lake Vättern”  
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landscapes have a global spread and have proved successful under many different economical, ecological and social/historical circumstances, namely Biosphere Reserves and Model Forests (see links below). These two concepts also stick out since the local actors are involved in the planning of the area from the very beginning – this is the basic requirement and also the key to the successful management.

In the Baltic Sea Region there exists slightly more than 40 Biosphere Reserves. Half of them are in western Russia and Belarus. The interest in Biosphere Reserves is growing rapidly and in i.e. Sweden and Finland four new sites are now under development. The number of Model Forests is lower, including one existing and two more in development in Sweden, a handful of sites in development in Finland and Poland, and also two existing and a few in development in western Russia.

The Ecoregion project has helped in creating cooperation between countries (especially Finland and Sweden) and also between sectors and regions (especially between the forest sector and region Lahti) on the issue of Biosphere Reserves. Through the work of the Swedish Forest Agency, the project has started to create a network of Biosphere Reserves in Europe. The “kick-off” is planned to be held in parallel with the EuroMAB-meeting in 2011. It has also arranged a meeting aiming to push forward a Model Forest network in the Baltic Sea Region.

[www.unesco.org/mab](http://www.unesco.org/mab)  
[www.imfn.net](http://www.imfn.net)



Biosphere Reserve Network meeting in Sweden © Simon Jonegård

## Glossary

- Baltic 21 – the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region is a regional process for sustainable development initiated by the Prime Ministers of the Baltic Sea countries in 1996. It is a regional expression of the global Agenda 21 adopted by the United Nations.
- BSR – the Baltic Sea Region is a pan-European region with the Baltic Sea in the middle without strictly delimited borders, usually composed of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, Sweden, Poland and the Baltic regions of Russia and Germany. Sometimes it also includes Belarus, Iceland and Norway.
- CBSS – the Council of the Baltic Sea States is an overall political forum for regional inter-governmental cooperation. The Members of the Council are the eleven states of the Baltic Sea Region as well as the European Commission.
- Cohesion Policy – EU policy, that aims at furthering economic, social and territorial cohesion across the EU. It puts in place a mechanism for reduction of disparities within the EU and it promotes EU integration.
- Cohesion Report – a report on economic, social and territorial cohesion published by the EU Commission every three years. It details the progress in these areas and how the EU, national and regional governments have contributed.
- CoR – the Committee of the Regions is an advisory body that allows local and regional authorities to make their voices heard in the decision-making process of the EU.
- EESC – the European Economic and Social Committee is an advisory body founded in 1957 under the Treaty of Rome. In policy discussions with the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament it represents the interests of employers, trade unions, farmers, consumers and the other interest groups that collectively make up ‘organised civil society’.
- ESDP – the European Spatial Development Perspective is a legally non-binding document that provides administration tiers with planning responsibility with 60 options for spatial policy. It was approved by the Informal Council of Ministers of Spatial Planning of the EU in 1999.
- ESPON – the European Spatial Planning Observation Network is a EU funded applied research programme in the field of territorial development. Its aim is to provide European policy makers with new knowledge about territorial trends influencing regions and territories.
- Europe 2020 – a 10-year EU growth strategy proposed by the European Commission in 2010 aiming at „smart, sustainable, inclusive growth“ and at increased coordination of national and European policies.
- EUSBSR – the EU Strategy for the BSR is a strategy prepared by the European Commission and endorsed in 2009 by the European Council aiming at coordination of actions by Member States, regions, the EU, pan-Baltic organisations, financing institutions and non-governmental bodies in order to promote a more balanced development of the Baltic Sea Region.
- Green Papers – documents published by the European Commission to stimulate discussion on given topics at EU level. They invite the relevant parties to participate in a consultation process and may give rise to legislative developments that are then outlined in White Papers.
- LTP – the Long Term Perspective is a transnational strategic spatial planning document that describes visions, goals and actions for the spatial development of the BSR. It was adopted in 2009 by the VASAB ministers responsible for spatial planning in the BSR.
- OMC – the Open Method of Coordination is used in areas, which fall within the competence of the Member States but are important for EU development. It usually implies joint identification of objectives, joint establishment of measuring instruments and joint benchmarking, with the Commission’s role limited to surveillance.
- Place based approach to cohesion policy – a long-term approach respecting territorial specificities, aiming at better use of endogenous potential and reducing persistent social exclusion in specific places through external interventions and multilevel governance.
- Presidency of the Council of the European Union – Council chairmanship organised on the basis of a half-yearly rotation system, under which each Member State holds the Presidency for a period of six months.
- SD – the concept of sustainable development refers to a form of development that meets present-day needs without compromising the ability of future generations to satisfy their own requirements. The objective of sustainable development is threefold: development that is economically efficient, socially fair and environmentally sustainable.
- TA EU – the Territorial Agenda of the EU is a common policy paper aiming at mobilising the potentials of European regions and cities and at utilizing its territorial diversity for sustainable economic growth and jobs through integrated spatial development; it was agreed on by the EU Ministers responsible for spatial development at the Informal Ministerial Meeting held in 2007.
- TC – Territorial cohesion is a horizontal principle of the EU Cohesion Policy; a competence shared between the Union and the Member States to make the best use of territorial structures and potential for stimulating sustainable development at local, regional, national and European scales.
- Treaty of Lisbon – the treaty was signed in 2007 and entered into force in 2009. It amends the current EU and EC treaties without replacing them and it provides the EU with modern institutions and working methods to tackle both efficiently and effectively today’s challenges in today’s world.
- TSP – the Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union is an assessment of current territorial developments of the EU. It served as a background document for drafting the Territorial Agenda of the EU.
- VASAB – Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010 is an intergovernmental programme of 11 countries of the Baltic Sea Region on multilateral cooperation in spatial planning and development established in 1992, guided by the Conference of Ministers responsible for spatial planning and development.

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