

European territorial development perspectives: politics and planning

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This dissertation aims to reconstruct European Union politics interacting with the territory (politics for "balanced competitiveness", for urban areas, rural areas, for the environment, for physical and telematic communication infrastructures, for energy and tourism).

This study is based on the Eurostat statistical information presented in "The Sixth periodic report" and in the official dossiers published from 1990 (particularly EUROPE 2000, EUROPE 2000+ and "European Spatial Perspectives Development"- ESPD), and analyses the present and future state of the European territory and the above mentioned politics.

I have examined the evolution of the EU competence concerning these issues that interfere with the territory, when no institutional competence is specified in the treaties.

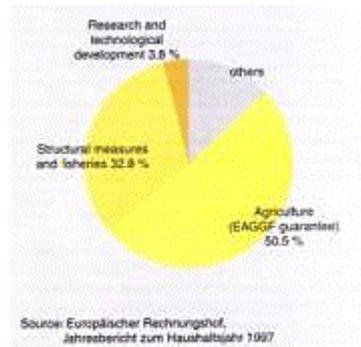
I have elaborated a historical outline of the studies published from 1989 which contributed to formulate the ESPD. ***The ESPD is the first propositional and intergovernmental document*** that aims to realise, - through "long term strategic visions" and policy options - a vertical and intersectoral co-ordination *for the development of the European polycentric, balanced, competitive and sustainable space*.

Fig. 5: Triangle of Objectives: a Balanced and Sustainable Spatial Development



Triangle of Objectives of the ESPD: a balanced and sustainable Spatial Development

The ESPD is new for the intersectoral and interdisciplinary approach of its policy options. In addition, it introduces many important ideas for transnational and cross-border co-operation programmes among the "15" member states, which in the future will allow them to continue receiving funding (Structural and Cohesion funds) and, after 2006, to invest it in the development of the EU "accession countries".



The EU budget (1997) – The EU with the "15" member states and the potential "accession countries".

It is obvious that the ESPD policy options, the policies of structural and cohesion funds, the transnational and cross-border co-operation programmes (such as INTERREG III), and the national and regional State policies unavoidably produce effects on the EC territory and interact with the various planning systems.

In order to study whether and how we can implement the ESPD strategic guidelines, I first focused on the revised version of the "Compendium" – updated on the basis of a deeper analysis of the legislation and the town planning instruments of some EU countries (Italy, Netherland, France, Germany and England) – and compared the planning systems of the "15" state members. On this purpose the EU planning systems have also been compared with the **ESPD**, which follows **the logic of the overlocal, strategic and subsidiary management**

Centralized States (like France, England, and the Netherlands), which elaborate plans and programmes at the national level, can easily interact on the European level and adopt EU and ESPD guidelines. The *Dutch national guideline plan* and the *French national plan* define the physical, economical aspects and study the directive for the conservation of the territory, whereas the *English planning system* is marked by *strategic guidelines* at every level.

On the contrary, both Germany, which has a **federal system**, and Spain and Italy, which have a **regionalized state**, find it difficult to interact with the EU planning system because the Laender, the Comunidades Autonomas and the Regioni have no national planning instruments. In fact, planning systems have to be directed towards "overlocal planning" to participate to national and European co-ordination of policies – while, for example, the Italian and Spanish planning systems are mainly focused on the local plane.



The ESPD, like the Dutch planning system, proposes to co-ordinate future organisations of the territory through **the logic of programme**, which follows a strategic, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach and provides for policy options that are "adaptable" to the local level. The "logic of overlocal programme" characterises the Dutch, German, French and English planning systems, while Italy and Spain are free of "overlocal strategic planning frameworks".

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