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What Does Europe Want From the Next ESDP?

*Report
by
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INTRODUCTION

The seminar on "What Does Europe Want from the Next ESDP?" was organised by the European Council of Town Planners in association with the UK Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The purpose of the event was to consider what Europe expected from the European Spatial Development Perspective, and how issues such as territorial cohesion, polycentric development and competitiveness are addressed, alongside on-going processes of integration, enlargement, and research.

This paper provides a summary of presentations given during the day and develops key themes on concepts relating to the ESDP and ESPON emerging from the day.

SESSION CHAIRS

Jan Vogelij (ECTP)
Virna Bussadori (ECTP)
Christabel Myers (ODPM)

SPEAKERS

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Klaus R. Kunzmann, School of Planning, University of Dortmund, Germany
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Detailed copies of individual presentations are available from the Secretariat of the European Council of Town Planners, e-mail secretariat@ceu-ectp.org, and the full report is on the ECTP website at <http://www.ceu-ectp.org/e/conf.html>

Welcome Address

Mike Ash

Deputy Director & Chief Planner, Planning Directorate, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, UK

The European Spatial Development Perspective came out in 1999. In the period since publication, social cohesion, competitiveness and integration have all affected the shape and form of regional planning, particularly within the UK. The publication of the national planning policy statement PPG11 on Regional Planning in October 2000 recognised the importance of the ESDP which, in turn, impacted upon the contents of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill currently going through the parliamentary process. However, some of the emerging concepts need further elaborating and developing.

Polycentric development of the EU territory, a principle of the ESDP, has begun to be a principle of the English Regional Planning Guidance Notes (RPGs) but there is a need for more concrete conceptual and research bases before the adoption of polycentric development can be considered further in a practical way. The report prepared by Cliff Hague of Heriot Watt University on the concept of polycentricity (see pages 12-13) is a useful starting point here, as is the experience of Interreg projects which are contributing to putting polycentric development into practice.

The issue of improving accessibility and information and communication technology is beginning to be addressed through transportation plans for Regional Spatial Strategies (the replacement to RPGs in England); similar plans and strategies were being prepared in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. One important transportation issue in this respect is the development of high speed train services.

The sustainable management of natural resources is another key ESDP principle being addressed by the UK Government, through the need for the sustainable appraisal of policies now being developed at the local level.

The UK is taking a proactive approach to planning and in England the Government is strengthening planning at all tiers, to achieve better integration and provide a stronger framework for the purpose of sustainable development. The introduction of sub-regional spatial strategies will address economic growth and contribute towards the improved economic performance of all regions. At the local level, the Government is committed to introducing a more flexible spatial planning process with strong community involvement and the new Local Development Frameworks will be able to address social, economic and environmental issues and their inter-relationships. Alongside these new strategies and planning frameworks, the key drivers of change will remain the infrastructure providers, but it is intended for the infrastructure issues to be integrated within the new documents.

Within Scotland, the Scottish Executive is intending to develop a National Spatial Planning Framework with a draft of the document scheduled for release during 2004. In Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government had already issued the draft national Wales Spatial Plan for consultation. Meanwhile, in Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Executive had commenced work on the draft Regional Strategy 2025. Devolution has permitted different approaches to planning across different parts of the UK but all are working, broadly, according to the form of the ESDP.

Turning to future agendas, enlargement is bound to have great impacts and this will have implications for planning, and the framework of planning, right across Europe. The key question is "What should be done?" No one would want a repeat of the long-winded preparation process that accompanied ESDP1. The important issues are to find ways to strengthen communication and research across the European territory in relation to planning and to find ways to consider how other community initiatives can be considered within the planning framework as well as how other nations can work together on shared planning problems. The ESDP provided a platform within the EU, and through Interreg programmes, Community databases established as part of ESPON, and enhanced networks and links between countries, particularly the accession countries, new challenges will be addressed. The key task is to address issues of connectivity.

European Spatial Planning as a Process

Andreas Faludi

Professor of Spatial Policy Systems in Europe at the University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands

The production of a plan is a step-by-step process and an interactive process. The ESDP is both a process and an application, and involves a roving band of planners moving around Europe, interacting. The Leipzig Principles underlay the Potsdam ESDP. But the question we should now consider is whether to initiate a follow-up to the first ESDP. At the time of the ESDP's preparation, the ministers of the member states had committed themselves to a follow-up document, but since the ESDP's application over the last four years, things have gone very quiet.

France, the Netherlands and Germany have not taken any initiative to progress the ESDP in their own countries. In the Netherlands, for example, the 5th National Spatial Planning Framework pays only lip-service to the ESDP and there has been no discernible influence on its contents. The German Länder are suspicious of the ESDP even in its final form, but both the Netherlands and Germany have Interreg programmes. Within the UK by contrast, and in support of Mike Ash's discussion, the ESDP has had a major influence on practices and new institutional processes of planning but the process there is always on the move. The ESDP has also had influence on the Member States of the Nordic countries and in Eire, while in Spain there have been clear attempts to translate the ESDP into planning initiatives in some of the Autonomous Communities with significant effects. In terms of enlargement, the candidate states have also started looking to the ESDP. The Slovakian Spatial Development Strategy of 1999 has attempted to assimilate the principles of the ESDP into existing sectoral policies; both Hungary and Slovenia have also been attempting translation within their borders.

Within the European Community, there are a large number of references to the ESDP within Commission documents, which is rather surprising given the fact that the ESDP is not an official document. These references include citations within documents relating to: the Structural Funds, for example, and the requirement for Funds to be applied within the context of the ESDP; the White Paper on Governance, which refers to the need for joined-up governance; and the Second Cohesion Report. The ESDP document formally belongs to the Member States, but it is interesting to note that the EC is using it as a source of legitimacy. There have been difficulties in this relationship. The Member States have claimed that the ESDP was their document, not the Community's. In response, the EC withdrew the Committee for Spatial Development in protest. That, in effect, put an end to the wrangling. Instead, the EC has started to consider ways in which the Community can exercise some regional control, without the need to interact formally with the level of nation states. The result has been a focus on territorial cohesion, although in many ways some of the principles of the ESDP are emerging under this new guise and the Open Method of Coordination is viewed as the future.

The Open Method of Coordination is a process of mutual learning. It is a label for a number of approaches where the EC had no clear mandate. Its form is for the EC to give guidance with short, medium and long term targets and benchmarks for the development of good practice within the EU, based on voluntary arrangements and peer review. It is organised by the EC and Chaired by the Commission all in the name of learning about new methods of coordination. There are three ways in which this may be applied in the future:

1. The reunification of Europe (focusing on enlargement);
2. Constitutional arrangements (through territorial cohesion); and
3. Financial perspectives 2007-12 (by setting detailed parameters).

Turning towards speculation as to future practices. Let us assume that the European Council of heads of state and government at some point in the future invites the European Commission to prepare a "European Union Territorial Cohesion Strategy" (EUTCS). This would build upon the Lisbon Strategy that already implies cohesion and a strategy for sustainable development. Also, the strategy would attempt to pursue polycentric development. All Member States agreed to the principle of polycentric development within the ESDP. The Council of Europe would insist upon Open Method of Coordination as the basis for the preparation of the EUTCS. The result of this would be that the ESDP would become an example of the Open Method of Coordination, and of a soft law – without EC competence and with no bind on Member States. The Member States and the EC would both be jointly responsible for the document and would progress its preparation as a form of mutual learning. And yet the document would be devoid of high-level political support.

The EC would try and formulate a framework for the Territorial Policies of the European Union itself, by coordinating initiatives and through internal coordination. The Commission would prepare a Strategic Framework for EU Territorial Cohesion Policies, while Member States would prepare a Territorial Cohesion Plan for Action using the territorial indicators developed as a result of the commissioned work within the European Spatial Planning Observatory Network research programme. There would be a series of mutual reviews and

learning through networks, reporting back to the EC but with non-binding recommendations. The Commission would be performing a new role; it would not be the owner of the new process but it would be the coordinator, promoter and choreographer. All actors would attempt to try and understand spatial process and positions, leading to the concept of “spatial positioning”. The visions of each Member State towards spatial positioning would, in effect, rub off on each other. The problem, then, would be reconciling the various visions.

Does Europe really need another ESDP - an ESDP+ - and, if so, what should it look like?

Klaus Kunzmann

Jean Monnet Professor of European Spatial Planning, School of Planning, University of Dortmund

In looking forward to whether Europe should embark upon another ESDP, we need to judge whether the previous (or current) ESDP has been a success. The short answer is: yes and no. The process was undoubtedly a great step forward and the ESDP itself has revived interest in spatial planning. The document has also served as a useful reference point for regional and national spatial planning, mainly because of its comprehensiveness – no other planning document is available in nine languages. It is also useful because it identifies common problems within the EU. Taken together, the ESDP has raised the previously low profile of spatial planning in many European countries, and we have already heard of success stories in the UK, and in Italy, for example.

The ESDP has inspired communities and introduced the terminology of spatial planning as something new with an associated mission to think and plan in a much more comprehensive way. It has given birth to concepts such as polycentric development, balanced competitiveness, and sustainable development, but the document has been difficult to implement against realities of economic development and the pressures of the market. A major achievement has been that agencies are required to refer to the ESDP in order to apply successfully for new initiatives and European funds.

On the negative side, the ESDP has not been a success within Germany, France or Switzerland, where it has evoked little interest outside a small circle of regional spatial planners and academics. Even among planners, there has been little reception towards the document at the local level. The ESDP has been considered as a rather technocratic document, a paper tiger, with little regard to or awareness of real political decision making requirements. With the absence of imaginative maps, the contents of the document have been difficult to communicate more widely. In contrast to the Commission’s perspective, the ESDP’s message is viewed as nothing more than a fig leaf to cover the negative externalities of the EC’s competition policies, transport policies, and energy policies. This has resulted in the fact that planners are not doing what planners should be doing. In some countries, the form and content of the ESDP is not anything new. Germany, for example, has been long used to some of the concepts outlined within the ESDP.

More positively, the ESDP is the first pan-European spatial planning and development document, and it has become an influential multi-lingual textbook for regional planners across the European territory. It has resulted in serious attempts to iron-out regional problems and find ways to remove impediments to development. There is a problem here between the requirement for balanced competitiveness and diversity within and between Member States, and there is clearly a danger of the ESDP becoming a textbook in planning rhetoric. More cynically, the ESDP has ensured that planners’ employment is more guaranteed because the ESDP has legitimised planning jobs, research projects and trans-national cooperation, networking and conferences.

How important is the ESDP for Europe? Despite the criticism, the ESDP undoubtedly is an important document for the future spatial planning of and within Europe, although not necessarily for the future development of cities and regions. The document legitimises the role of the public sector in spatial development in times of deregulation and the prominence of the market, although one could again consider whether it is a paper tiger in this respect. The ESDP also sets out European-wide normative goals and standards for spatial planning at the regional, national and European levels, even though some people may not agree that this is so desirable. The document also stresses the importance of the spatial dimension of sector planning, although this seems to depend on whether actors within those sectors know about it and take its messages seriously. It is valuable because it brings together planners from all over Europe to discuss common planning problems and joint interests and, from that point of view, the ESDP as the product of 15 different Member States is a miracle!

So, to take the question of the day, do we need another ESDP? As a matter of fairness, yes we should prepare another, if only because of the need for the document to be extended to Eastern Europe. This would require little effort, since 90 per cent of the document is similarly valid for the accession countries, and not that much has changed within Europe since the 15 Member States approved the document. It would, admittedly, need some editorial amendments and an additional chapter on the particular challenges facing Eastern Europe. The new document could then be called ESDP25. Nevertheless, any revision could be opening a can of worms, because of the requirement to find consensus between both the old and new EU Member States. In any revision, the document should set a stronger focus on sustainability and cultural issues, both of which are underplayed in the current ESDP. It could also stress the key role of the public sector in spatial development, and reconsider the urban-rural relationship concept. Finally, it should contain maps rather than diagrams. With this in mind, it may be more appropriate to elaborate not one but a series of European Spatial Development Perspectives (ESDP+++), that follows a biannual schedule and builds on the fundamentals of the existing documents.

The reasons for a preference for a series of ESDPs relate to the need to promote the European project, regional cooperation and networking, and the need to promote spatial planning. This would also keep the spatial momentum in European regional policies and would hopefully have some effect on European sector policies. It could also be justified in terms of on-going European research on spatial development, and further encourage national and regional spatial policies.

If this approach were adopted, the form the new documents could take would be dependent on a number of key principles, relating to the need to reduce complexity, promote the spatial dimension, maintain the European dimension, and address controversial European policy issues. So the options for the format of an ESDP+ could be:

- An ESDP+ Periphery, that addresses the loose regions – the inner and outer periphery – of European integration and develops ideas and scenarios for their likely futures;
- An ESDP+ Urban, that focuses on European city-regions only, on the problems of suburbanisation, spatial fragmentation and social polarization;
- A series of ESDP+ documents, that addresses selected integrated policy areas such as: water and spatial development; the European cultural space; land use and transportation; industrial decline and environmental degradation; internal and external border regions; transitional spaces, immigration and gateways; and European shores, tourism and second homes; or, for that matter, whatever matters in the European political arena.

This would appear to be preferable. The European Commission could do the work along with appointed consultants. Alternatively, a revived Committee for Spatial Development could perform the work, or even the European Spatial Planning Observatory Network.

How Might ESPON Inform a New ESDP?

Peter Mehlbye

Director General, European Spatial Policy Observation Network, Luxembourg

The preparation of the ESDP during the 1990s indicated a deficit in the amount of comparable data across the European territory. Each nation had its own national statistics and perceptions. The data that was available was also limited to the 15 Member States that took ownership of the ESDP. This meant there was a clear demand for a new observatory. This gave rise to ESPON, the European Spatial Planning Observatory Network.

ESPON is concerned with the spatial development of the European territory, including the prospects for an enlarged EU. Linking to Structural Funds and Interreg initiatives, the Observatory possesses a budget of € 12m, plus has an additional € 2m from partner states in the light of EU enlargement. By 2006/7, the probability is that there will be 26 or 27 research projects in operation across Europe, intended to improve the knowledge base for existing States and for enlargement. This will assess territorial development, tensions and imbalances and assess scenarios for the enlarged territory. The Observatory provides support to the perceptions contained within and the application of the European Spatial Development Perspective.

A number of projects are being progressed during this, first phase from 2002-4. The preliminary results of these 16 international projects were made available in August 2003 and over 300 maps produced for EU15 and 13 world maps produced, together with new typologies and indicators relating to specific sectoral issues. These

project findings are being developed further with ideas for policy recommendations. Altogether, the Observatory – and its research teams - has produced more than 3,318 pages of research information to digest.

There have been substantial preliminary results together with the generation of new knowledge. The common guidance provided by ESPON in Luxembourg and the shared platform has worked, with the production of good quality and useful outcomes, even if there have been some differences between the international reports. Close dialogue is needed as projects move towards completing final reports.

There will be a number of challenges ahead in order to utilise ESPON's results effectively. These include the need to digest the preliminary results, and enhance consistency between projects and research and networking. There will also be a requirement for clarity on outcomes and policy recommendations, with a clear concept developed on territorial cohesion. Improvements are also needed in respect of the approach towards dealing with balanced competitiveness and polycentricity, with the promotion of analysis of typologies and indicators, and the development of the analysis of maps. Further work is required on the development of Territorial Impact Assessment and SWOT analyses. Given the fact that the ESPON programme has generated over 120 new datasets, ESPON needs to build its work into appropriate GIS databases, and ensure the further coordination in terminology and design.

All this work will be influenced by a number of on-going initiatives, including the EU Convention on Territorial Cohesion within the Lisbon Treaty, the 3rd Cohesion Report, Structural Funds for the 2007-13 period, and the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. It seems clear that territory will become the focus for coordination and reconciliation and we should be thinking about not only the prospect of a revised ESDP for EU27+ but also an ESPON2.

For the period after 2005, there will be a need to consider new projects. Among the possible issues that could be addressed within new ESPON projects, are: the territorial impact of fisheries policies; the role of the EU in the world; the territorial development of the Lisbon Strategy; the territorial impact of EU economic policies; the territorial dimension of sustainable development; improvements in the social and economic dimension; and relationships between ESPON research results and Interreg IIIB areas. It should also be noted that ESPON is currently making little contribution to the local level or to the NUTS-III level¹.

The ESPON work should ensure that the implementation of the ESDP is improved in the years ahead. This will be achieved by the provision of a clearer focus on territorial structures and stronger global perspectives. Furthermore, detailed policy orientations will be available reflecting differences in the territory's diversity. The work will also enable the integration of new states into the EU territory and for the planning implications to be assessed, with clearer links to existing EU policy developments, and a clearer focus on policy implementation to a range of spatial scales. It is important, nevertheless, to recognise that the political ambitions of the EU territory are not yet defined and that the ESDP, or its successor, is not a plan or blueprint. Above all, it is imperative for consensus to be achieved across the 25 countries, in reflection of real and pragmatic situations, so we should not raise our ambitions too high.

What Do Practising Planners Want From ESDP2?

Jan Vogelij

ECTP President-elect

First, let us consider what the main achievements are of the ESDP. It produced 5 years of cooperation and produced an agreed set of policy options and objectives. The ESDP also led directly to the establishment of Interreg projects across the EU, leading to an enhanced focus on spatial visioning, and an awareness of the spatial dimensions of Structural Funds. More significantly, it led to the creation of ESPON, to provide information on spatial developments, key indicators and the development of databases, and sets of proposals and recommendations, and involved spatial planners, giving prominence to planners as a professional group. The creation of diagrams has assisted in formulating a view of polycentricity across Europe.

¹ NUTS= Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics, created by the European Office for Statistics (Eurostat) as a single hierarchical classification of spatial units used for statistical production across the European Union. At the top of the hierarchy come the 15 member states of the EU; below that are NUTS levels 1 to 5, which progress down the scale of administrative units.

In terms of the period since the Potsdam ESDP was published, there have been a number of developments that have affected spatial policy development within the EU. These include the prospect of enlargement and the move from EU15 to EU25 and its spatial implications, the Lisbon Strategy and the prospect of more innovative regions, and the European Convention that enhances the prospect for territorial cohesion.

Planners have certainly become more aware of European spatial planning initiatives over the last five years, together with documents on the subject and have developed experience of working with them. But this has only precipitated enhanced expectations of what the ESDP could or should do, and – in some quarters – a desire for a new ESDP2. These expectations are varied and reflect the fact that each country has its own interpretation of the answers as to how next to proceed.

Dealing with these issues in more detail, it is clear that awareness of European spatial planning initiatives is good but variable, with some misinterpretation, variable knowledge and links across bordering countries, with few planners with true awareness at the national level, where some States possess personal interests, and possibly little focus on funding. There is, then, a sparsity of knowledge and work seems to be quite disconnected at the local level. Only those active in spatial policy matters at the national level possess good awareness of the content of spatial planning documents, and reasons for the lack of dissemination or wider knowledge relate to, possibly, the lack of political status of the ESDP, the lack of vision, and the capture of debates by the academic community.

Those planners that are active in the debate appear to be those working with the documents on a regular basis, at the national or regional level, or where there are already institutional arrangements in place to deal with the policies. Hardly any practitioners on the ground, it seems, are dealing with the practical implications of the ESDP. And so if we begin to assess what the expectations are for an ESDP2, we have to remember that it could depend on the active participation of the national level of policy-making, to promote measures against marginalisation, with the European Council of Town Planners providing a network of information, with operational links to other policies, and a consultative process of development and feedback that refreshes national approaches. Among the core issues that need to be considered are, the consequences of accession, axes of international communication and transportation development, ecological and rural structures, shifts in transport modes, the role of spatial drivers, and the reduction of disparities.

More involvement is therefore needed, to progress the objectives of sustainability and balanced development, resulting in a polycentric network of cities and the Natura 2000 ecological network. This will require regional and local elaboration and the active involvement of planners at those spatial scales.

In terms of the future work for planners, the ESDP as a framework should aim at clarity about locations, relating to the polycentric urban network, development locations, the promotion of innovative and specialised regions and at the same time allow for regional and local interpretations. The promotion of regional development visions could then contain regional interpretations of these features and policy priorities. There will be a need for the ESPON results to be communicated to planners, through planning associations and national conferences of dissemination. More specifically, there will be a need to promote the preparation of an ESDP2, involving planners at all levels, with possibly DG Regio becoming DG Spatial Development, and ESPON as the EU spatial planning agency.

See end of the report for the detailed responses from ECTP member organisations to an informal survey of awareness of ESDP.

Links Between the ESDP, ESPON and the EU Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment

Carlo Lavallo

Chair, EU working group on Sustainable Urban Management

We need to consider what the links are between the ESDP, ESPON and the EU Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. The Thematic Strategy is intended to promote an integrated approach across EC policies, taking into account the progress made in implementing existing cooperative frameworks, and reviewing the integration where necessary. Among the issues the Strategy will address are: the promotion of Local Agenda 21; the reduction of the link between economic growth and passenger travel demand; the need for an increased share in public transport, rail, inland waterways, walking and cycling; the need to promote the use of low emission vehicles in public transport; and consideration of urban environment indicators.

A thematic strategy must include quantitative and qualitative environmental and sectoral objectives against which long-term effects and methods may be measured. The Commission must define the content of a

thematic strategy, through setting objectives, methods, and timetables, in the form of a proposal for a framework directive to the Council and to the European Parliament. The strategies must also be developed in cooperation with stakeholders, particularly with national organizations and industry, and the methods utilized have to be worked out in partnership with these organizations. It is intended for the impacts of the strategies to be monitored and assessed through the Commission reporting regularly to the Council and Parliament on key developments, through indicators developed between the EEA and Eurostat and through follow-up reports, and through scenario development and modelling, in an attempt to assess likely future trends.

The timetable indicates that the input from working groups, stakeholder consultation and internal discussions to the Commission will occur by the end of 2003, followed by the adoption of an Interim Communication entitled, "Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment". In 2004, there will be wide consultation on this document and the further development of ideas in cooperation with stakeholders. It is intended for the Commission's proposal to be adopted by July 2005.

The Strategy's initial priority areas are: Sustainable urban management; Sustainable urban transport; Sustainable design and land use; and Sustainable construction.

The approach towards the Strategy is based on the concept of cities operating as complex systems. These urban systems support an ensemble of functions that interact with each other and influence the physical development of the city and its surrounding area. Urban functions may be related to housing, mobility and accessibility, commerce, industry and related services, and leisure and recreation. The physical urban system comprises several static elements, including buildings, infrastructure, open space, abandoned and derelict areas, agriculture and forestry, together with more dynamic elements such as transport, water, energy and waste.

Each urban function is ruled by a specific policy and, as a consequence, the policies influence and drive the development of the static and dynamic elements of the system. Individual policies can be formulated at distinct administrative and political levels, at national, regional, local or European. Where policies are developed sectorally, individual developments that are deemed to be required to support one function can impact upon the effective operation of other functions. The static and dynamic elements serve many masters and can also be influenced by many masters. Mutual influences are typically driven by socio-economic and physical criteria.

Some definitions are necessary at this point. I take "urban sustainability" to mean the sustainability concept. The more sustainable an urban area is, the less it disturbs ecological cycles at all levels from local to global, and the healthier it is as a living environment for the citizens living in it and in its environs. Socio-economic activities are considered to the extent that they influence environmental sustainability and vice versa.

The general criteria for assessing the potential contribution of management systems to environmental sustainability may be constructed from assessing scope and power, subsidiarity, integration and coordination, and learning capacity. And there will be a number of dimensions relating to the attributes of the system. The sorts of problems that may occur and that serve as obstacles or difficulties are diverse. There may be a limited cooperation beyond administrative borders, or of policy integration. There may be a lack of participatory integration, or limited links between the local, national or European administrative levels. There may also be a lack of institutional capacity or even willingness to learn, or problems of private-public partnerships and a lack of resources. There may also be lukewarm commitments towards sustainability issues more generally.

In order to take this forward, the Working Group on Sustainable Urban Management have made a number of recommendations. These comprise: encouraging cooperation beyond administrative borders; improve availability of data, tools and practices; develop institutional capacity to facilitate sectoral integration and public-private partnerships; and support local governance and increase public awareness. Other relevant recommendations relate to management of the transport systems across whole urban areas, and for planning and design to promote sustainable land use. And in relation to targets and indicators, there is a need to identify these in order to monitor the Thematic Strategy and a need for better data on urban environmental issues.

As far as the links between the Thematic Strategy and the ESDP and ESPON are concerned, the ESDP aims to promote polycentric development and a new urban-rural partnership, together with parity of access to information, knowledge and infrastructure, and management of the natural and cultural heritage. ESPON, in turn, is considering functional urban areas in relation to sectoral specialisms, and scalar issues for the enhancement of polycentrism. The policy options available, and which may stem from ESPON, can be thought of at particular levels: at the regional level, there should be infrastructure investment, strategic planning and coordination, and relationships between EU funding and other policies; at the national level, there should be a division of labour between national nodes, a second tier of cities in mono-centric and accession countries, and EU funding to encourage national planning; and at the EU level, new global integration zones should be

identified and/or strengthened, and trans-European networks, EU institutions, and the polycentric objective closely linked.

There needs to be a sound set of tools to measure and compare the EU scales of governance and administration in relation to the delivery of sustainable urban development, with data, indicators and scenarios. In my view, the physical space and time dimension is key, not only so that it can be located or presented on a map, but also understand interactions. There are often multiple causes often acting on a single effect, while 'the function' is the element to monitor. There is also a need for cross-policy coordination horizontally across themes and between administrations and vertically from the local to the EU. Among the issues that should be addressed are: enhancing those functions that increase impacts on environment and health; assessing the criteria for real sustainable development; and whether a set of integrated indicators can be established to alert unsustainable trends. Finally, I conclude by considering two ideas for a common framework.

First, the Thematic Strategy and ESDP/ESPO both need strong cooperation between cities and regions. The Strategy is a legislative process resulting in a regulatory framework. Since it rests on subsidiarity, it will require acceptance at the lowest level, i.e. cities and regions must be involved in the process. ESDP/ESPO rests more on voluntary initiative, and so the cities, regions and Member States must buy into the process. Secondly, the environment should be considered as an integral component of territorial analysis, rather than a stand-alone element. More issues need to be considered, including elements of climate change, health dimensions, and a review of the traditional social-economic-environment policy triangle, whose corners should be abolished.

The UK Polycentricity Study

Cliff Hague

Heriot Watt University and UK ESPON Contact Point

This talk discusses the contents of a new study undertaken by Heriot Watt University on behalf of the UK Government on the subject of polycentricity. It concerned problems of definition, scope and awareness of polycentric development and assessed who may use polycentric development in practice.

The ESDP discussed the need to work "towards balanced and sustainable development of the European territory", and sought a polycentric settlement structure across the whole of the EU which it viewed as "an essential pre-requisite for balanced and sustainable development". The ESDP, and the concept of polycentricity, was seen as a means to enhance competitiveness and regional balance. A key question which then emerges is, 'how can you achieve that?'

Complementarity by different regions creates a critical mass, while it has to be acknowledged that cities sustain rural areas by underlying economic changes. The linkages and networks between spaces overcome barriers of space, boundaries or rivalries.

If we take a hypothetical example of monocentricity, we would find a large urban settlement with a dominant industry such as a pit, with links to a village and small town that are just dormitories. The links between these places are weak and, predominantly, one way only. In polycentricity, by contrast, there is much more of a functional network, with the village attracting people from the large settlement, a regenerated town centre, and strong links and complementarity. At higher scales, and national or transnational polycentric development, a new globally competitive economic integration zone could be created with strong links between the different centres within the polycentric urban region, based on transport and communications.

They key questions that emerge in relation to polycentricity concern:

- Whether networks of medium sized cities can complete more effectively;
- Whether polycentric development aids cohesion; and
- Whether polycentric development increases travel.

In answer to the first question, clusters offer greater access to labour, suppliers, specialist firms, local markets and knowledge. They can facilitate innovation and provide for a cumulative causation, where over time the advantages become self-reinforcing. An example of this type of network is Stuttgart.

In answer to the second question, there is still some confusion as to what territorial cohesion is. There is a view that 'the best protection for a backward region is a bad road', since constructing a new road into a peripheral region does not necessarily mean growth for that region. It is a question of scale and equity; links between the

urban and the rural may assist in creating polycentricity, but there is less polycentricity at national urban systems.

In answer to the third question, the environmental concerns are addressed within the ESDP but these are presently not well linked to notions of polycentricity. A greater regard for linkages and travel needs to be balanced against peripheral region growth at the intra-regional scale. So policies to promote a region's airport would assist with linkages but not prove to be particularly environmentally friendly and yet this is considered to be one measure of polycentricity.

More work is required on notions of polycentric development, including improved methodologies, data sets, indicators and mapping, together with assessment from practice and Interreg projects and regional strategies, from ESPON, and the development of new good practice research and transnational cooperation on the subject.

What does Europe want from the next ESDP?

Margarita Jančič

Ministry of the Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy, Slovenia

This talk looked at the implications of enlargement for a new ESDP, using Slovenia as a case study. Following an introduction to the country, it is worth noting that even as an accession country, Slovenia is involved in a number of EU projects and initiatives, including Interreg projects and ESPON. The country possesses a strong administrative and organizational framework, with clear roles and responsibilities allocated to ministries, government and officials. Slovenia has had to address the new paradigm of spatial planning including issues concerned with subsidiarity, flexibility and integration, and to view planning as a continuous process with public participation and vertical and horizontal cooperation. This has necessitated establishing spatial management as a governmental activity across all tiers of administration.

New Slovenian spatial legislation points out the importance of sustainable development which is not just an environmental issue. Besides the widely agreed economic, environmental and social sustainability (the "ESDP triangle"), it stresses the importance of cultural sustainability, regional characteristics and endogenous resources. It stresses the importance of the complex and comprehensive system of *Territory*, where human dwelling and activity are grounded and the basis of sustainable development. The new legislation introduced a concept of "abstainable development".

A new ESDP is required for these reasons: addressing the various dimensions to achieve sustainable development, the importance of complex and integrated systems of Territory, and the importance of spatial development policies. What is fundamental is that we should not consider the influence of EU policies on the territory, but rather the compliance of those policies with the ESDP itself. Enlargement will bring with it new problems and opportunities for spatial planning to address, irrespective of the number of Member States within the EU. Sustainable development is never static and enlargement will bring significant imbalanced territories across Europe. The territorial structure will require new knowledge and indicators to be formulated, looking at a territory's potentials, characteristics and conditions.

A new ESDP should be based on updated analyses about existing and foreseen information about cooperation between Member States and bordering regions, networking, existing know-how, knowledge about spatial development planning practices and assessments. The new ESDP should be a 'Spatial Development Action Plan', setting out key principles, common aims, types of activities, measures, instruments to be utilised, and procedures for reporting. This would promote a spatial development approach, give spatial planning development activities a renaissance, enhance the role of regional and local authorities in the implementation of sustainable development policies that would provide synergies of activities and enable a preparation of widely acceptable solutions.

DISCUSSION WORKSHOPS

Four discussion workshops were held on the day, devoted to:

- Enlargement
- Structural funds and spatial development
- Sustainable spatial development
- Balancing local and strategic policy

Enlargement

Paul Drew provided a summary of the workshop devoted to Enlargement. Participants believed that existing Member States could learn from the accession states. Taking into account the diversity of those States, the ESDP needs to take account of diversity to a greater extent and needs to develop common criteria to be implemented at the regional level according to specific issues. The planning profession needs to reinforce the role and importance of the need for professionalism and an associated desire for a more integrated EU planning profession. The ESDP may be the vehicle for this to be achieved. In future, it should be more possible for the ESDP to be used to set a framework for the allocation of new EC funds. A new institutional and administrative capacity needs to be developed for the accession countries. Since there is a perception prevalent at the present time that planning is all about control, the ESDP could be used to assist in changing the perception from one of control to facilitating economic growth.

Structural Funds and Spatial Development

Frank D'hondt provided a summary of the workshop devoted to Structural Funds. Participants believed that it was necessary to achieve a balance in local and strategic policy, rather than one or the other; this is also necessary to move from regulatory planning to strategic planning, a process that is not deregulation but rather the enhancement of the process of planning. It is necessary for the EU to move from consideration of European sectoral policies to European strategic planning, combined with a process of incentives. Regions should not be thought of as fixed institutions but rather as interfaces between the local and the European, possessing know-how, networking abilities, and good governance. The existence of European strategies and incentives, with regional know-how, could then create the conditions for local strategy development.

Sustainable Spatial Development: the Lisbon Agenda

Karen Buchanan provided a summary of the workshop devoted to Structural Funds. Participants believed that competitiveness and sustainability should be thought of within the framework of a knowledge-based economy. The Lisbon agreement offers possibilities but not necessarily answers. The key question is what is needed at the level of the EU? The possibilities include a common set of policies to enable regional specialisation, and top-down and bottom-up analyses of opportunities and the strength of each region to be supported by EU information. Moreover there is demand for new visions that cross boundaries or that enable cooperation across regions, and establish the means for institutional capacity building to support competitiveness and sustainability. There was concern about the definition of competitiveness, particularly as it was stated that cooperation between the local, regional and national might achieve more benefits than competitiveness alone.

Balancing Local and Strategic Policy

Virna Bussadori provided a summary of the workshop devoted to Balancing Local and Strategic Policy. Participants considered positive and negative observations specifically in relation to structural funds and Interreg experiences. A main criticism was in relation to the huge burden that befell lead partners in any project. Networking is thought of well and is rewarding, but it can take anything between 12 and 18 months to get a project started, although sometimes a slow start is useful if there is some uncertainty on proceeding. With reference to the UK, the process of programme officers and national contact points was viewed as working well. But, for next time, it is best to define some terms – such as value for money and transferability – more clearly, and make the results available of past projects, to influence new projects as they are developed. Finally, it is also important to make the assessment criteria more transparent. One beneficial change in future may be to allow non-EU partners to gain finance and out-of-area partners too. The ESDP should be available in all relevant languages, and it is worthwhile to involve all actors because sometimes those who propose are not always the same individuals who implement policy.

QUESTIONS AND DEBATE

Michael Edwards asked about intra-urban inequalities and the need to push agendas down to practical levels, which would allow all planners to engage in the debate and link to other professions and other social partners, in order to engage people.

Klaus Kunzmann mentioned the different tiers of planning. There is a need for polycentric development at all tiers. But local planners might not be the best people; perhaps it is a job for regional planners (and in Germany, that would mean planners and geographers but not architects – a problem of professional “silos”, or limited thinking).

Cliff Hague suggested that there is a need to connect tiers and to work down the spatial scale. How can people access the information, when big conferences are of limited use in disseminating findings and do not reach the right people? Web training and training workshops are useful and active learning is vital.

Jan Vogelij talked about the evolving nature of planning systems and of decentralisation. Regions are best placed to elaborate and translate these practices.

Andreas Faludi was not worried about whether local planners addressed issues related to the ESDP or not. What was important was to cement relations at the national level. The discourse is still exclusively North West European. A scoping study is required on territorial cohesion since this is not necessarily the same as spatial planning. There is a need to make the professional community concerned with spatial planning more inclusive; at this meeting, for instance, the French were very noticeably absent.

Peter Hall discussed polycentric development at different scales and the possibility for them to work in contradiction – i.e. between a region and a dominant city within that region. Promoting polycentricity in mono-regions may be a problem because they are naturally monocentric. We need to try to measure these changes at the regional level where there has been a dearth of evidence to date.

Liz Mills mentioned reliance on data in order to advance policy and whether and how this would be achieved at the level of the EU. There was only a limited amount we can achieve as planners, particularly our influence over the market. Market instruments at the EU level are complementary to planning.

Peter Mehlbye suggested a need to try and narrow the focus but was uncertain about who the political audience is for this debate; that was the key challenge.

Jan Vogelij outlined legal barriers to spatial development at present and called on planners to look at what is changing in terms of development.

Derek Martin mentioned that the Dutch presidency has ambitions to translate the outcomes of ESPON into policy. The components of spatial action are present but we are not doing enough to try and access information and knowledge and apply them to existing EU instruments. We need to reanimate the process of the ESDP, to kick start it, but we may well have to rely on future presidencies for this to be achieved.

Cliff Hague suggested that there is scope for further analysis via impact studies on particular sectors territorially. But GDP - the market - is the main driver. There are barriers presently to assess comparable data between countries.

Andreas Faludi called for a long term perspective, with opportunity for reflection in terms of policy instruments, territorial dimensions and market interests.

Klaus Kunzmann stated that no newspaper has any interest in European spatial planning and this is something we should work on. We need to sell what we have.

Robert Upton, in reply, stated that European spatial planning issues are being debated in the media but usually under different labels and the route is to engage in political discussion that needs to understand and learn spatial implications. This needs to occur within a European context. The spatial drivers of change – airport policy, for example – do not seem to be discussed at the pan-European level. There must be links between airport policy and other sectoral issues.

Frank D'hondt discussed experience in Belgium. The country is aware of polycentric development and that this can be achieved in different ways. There is a requirement to mobilise concepts and ideas and develop a communication strategy for existing ideas rather than work towards a new ESDP.

Klaus Kunzmann was concerned about the development of a new European profession of planners.

Robert Upton explained that this was not the purpose of the ECTP but rather to promote a common agenda and provide a common understanding, while allowing for diversity.

Cliff Hague summed up the day. There is a need to legitimise the role of the planning profession role in steering EU Structural Funds and enhancing spatial thinking in other sectors. More work is required on European “spatial visions”, and using the ESDP to tackle real issues related to the EU’s planning problems. It is worthwhile evaluating the ESDP “model” to assess workability and degrees of influence. It is essential to raise awareness of the importance of the regional level of governance and policy-making. The show must go on since there is too much at stake and too much interest in it. We should not repeat past mistakes or view European spatial planning as regulatory planning. Perhaps overall we need to trust the EU a bit more.

CONCLUSION

If the question was “Does Europe want a second ESDP? “, the answer appears to be both yes and no. If it is to happen, there needs to be much greater consensus on what form, shape and purpose ESDP2 would have, which means addressing political issues.

The results of ESPON need to feed into policy and politics and into communication through the media. The production of maps could be a way to start this. Substantial issues relating to city regionalism and intra-urban issues, and social and economic tensions must be addressed. There is a continuous and uphill struggle to improve existing initiatives and measures before considering new ones. Older agendas and their problems will not disappear merely because ESPON produces new research results on new subjects.

Another focus should be on relationships between different scales, and discerning at which level is it most appropriate to take development decisions.

Enlargement will have a profound effect on Europe: there will not only be heightened expectations that Accession countries will embrace European spatial planning, but also expectations from Accession countries that a common pan-European approach to planning will be of use and assist them. This relates to fundamental questions about the future status of planning, at various spatial scales across the EU.

The relationship between the ESDP, ESPON, Structural Funds and Territorial Cohesion is questionable and complex. This needs addressing if the proactive possibilities of planning are to be “sold” politically.

In addition, the degree to which European spatial planning will then be “bought” will largely depend on interests external to planning; these issues are not solely the preserve of planners.

Finally, and despite the last point, European spatial planning does offer optimism and belief in the future of planning. But the task is not straightforward or easy, and it will require huge levels of commitment.

ANNEX

Survey on Awareness and understanding of ESDP

Views from European associations of professional planners
based on an informal survey of ECTP members, September 2003

<i>European Spatial Development Perspective</i>				<i>Possible new ESDP</i>
<i>COUNTRY</i>	<i>Awareness of current European spatial planning initiatives</i>	<i>Awareness of existing documents & programmes</i>	<i>Experience of working with existing documents & programmes</i>	<i>Expectations and wishes</i>
DENMARK from Foreningen af Byplanlæggere (FAB) [Danish Society of Town Planners]	The ESDP concept was firmly implemented in the 1997 National Planning Report "Denmark and European planning policy". The National Planning Report is the frame for all planning in regions and municipalities. So awareness of ESDP was very strong among planners in the late nineties.	Other than ESDP, European documents known in the Danish planning debate are: "Europe 2000+", "Visions and Strategies around Baltic" and "Europe's Environment - the Dobris Assessment".	It was - as already mentioned - important that the ESDP was implemented by government in a policy directed towards the planning authorities (regions and municipalities). ESDP helped Danish planners to lift the planning perspective to a European level.	In the late nineties there was a wide awareness of European planning issues in Denmark because of ESDP 1. The last two or three years this awareness has been weak. So ESDP 2 has to revitalise European planning issues at European, national and local level
GERMANY from Vereinigung für Stadt-, Regional- und Landesplanung (SRL) [Association for Town, Regional and Spatial Planning]	<p>SRL lacks broad-based information about this issue. In the process of putting German unification into a spatial planning perspective, the Federal Government developed the "Raumordnungspolitische Orientierungsrahmen" in 1994, in time to become the appropriate German contribution to the ESDP; one might call it a fine example of the principle of mutual consideration, and probably a reason why - apart from agencies involved in the process - little attention was paid to the ESDP.</p> <p>Nevertheless, concerning the awareness of European spatial planning initiatives, it is necessary to differentiate between planners in private practice, planners working in local/regional/state administrations and planners working in research organisations.</p> <p>For research, the Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning in Bonn is the most qualified institution. They are the national ESPON Contact Point and responsible for the various programs in European spatial planning.</p> <p>On the level of local/regional administrations, knowledge about European spatial planning initiatives among planners probably depends on whether the town or regional institution takes part in the programs and receives European funding or not.</p> <p>As far as SRL can estimate, planners in private practice are rarely concerned with the</p>	<p>Planners working with and in EU programs as already mentioned have not - until recently - made this an important point of discussion in SRL. One of the reasons for a relative modest awareness and overall knowledge of German spatial planners about European programs and cohesion and/or structural funds might also be that most funding in Germany goes to administrative bodies related to agriculture and the environment.</p> <p>That said, both annual conferences of SRL this year were/are clearly dealing with the European dimension. In May the meeting took place in two cities on both sides of the Odra and dealt with cross border planning initiatives (German-Polish-cooperation).</p> <p>In November the annual conference will take place in Karlsruhe looking at regional, cross border planning initiatives along the Rhine.</p> <p>Asking some of our members concerned with EU programs (without any claim of representation) taking part in the programs seems to be a very bureaucratic action beginning with the conditions of application, going on with lots of obligations concerning verifications and documentation (mainly INTERREG).</p>	<p>It was - as already mentioned - important that the ESDP was implemented by government in a policy directed towards the planning authorities (regions and municipalities). ESDP helped Danish planners to lift the planning perspective to a European level.</p>	<p><u>General:</u> ESDP is even less known in Germany than the various EU programs dealing with spatial development (Structural Funds, INTERREG). That may result from general feeling that spatial planning is not an EU competence but the responsibility of member states. ESDP is meant as a general guideline to a sustainable development of the EU but without legal effect as there is no EU competence to make it legally binding. Many of the issues mentioned have already been implemented into the legally binding German spatial planning system which (at least as set out in relevant legislation) also aims at sustainable development.</p> <p><u>More specific:</u> Many experts (some of them members of SRL) had high expectations relating to ESDP I in regard to some process guidelines regarding Accession countries and the process of integration in Central and Eastern Europe. So ESDP II must fully integrate the hopes and expectations, scenarios and guidelines for mutual development in Central Europe. The results of this process have to derive from a substantial analysis which identifies the problem areas and thus projects necessity for action ("Handlungsnotwendigkeit") onto the agenda. In doing so, ESDP II will develop strategies which will have to be discussed on a political level. To keep it</p>

	detail of EU programs. They may be engaged for single planning tasks by the relevant authorities; if they work in larger consultancy firms they might participate in cross-border planning initiatives (INTERREG etc.).			simple: real problems have to be discussed openly and adequate strategies have to be adopted. It is also necessary to illustrate strategies convincingly. To raise the awareness amongst planners it will be most helpful to visualize the findings and the future strategies for a unified Europe.
GREECE from Σύλλογος Ελλήνων Πολεοδόμων & Χωροτακτών (ΣΕΠΟΧ) [Greek Planners Association]	GPA's members are well informed on ESDP and less on other European initiatives, like ESPON. ESDP's principles have been incorporated in the recent 'spatial planning legislation' (1999) and referred in the regional level 'spatial frameworks'. Our association has organized open meetings for information and exchange of opinions within our members. However SEPOX's members are a minority of the professional town- planners in Greece. Especially those planners who deal with the urban design level have a scarce knowledge of the European initiatives and spatial policies.	The awareness on documents is good (see previous column). Awareness of programmes is not uniform: some of our colleagues follow in a systematic way, often in collaboration with Regional Authorities, or some Local Authorities; but most of them are informed only when a programme has finished (closing events and publications). There is a lack of transparency on the part of responsible government authorities, which distorts dissemination of information. Many programmes tend to lose their spatial character and be considered as financial instruments for classical regional development policy. Very often there are no planners involved either in central management system or the LA consultants. A good example is an «integrated urban programme» launched in some regional support framework, which is supposed to be a micrography of the 'urban initiative': the way it was designed and organized has nothing to do with integrated urban approach and the eligibility regulations lead in absorbing funds for typical urban infrastructures. Innovative or integrated character is not considered necessary.	Planners and Regional Authorities who have been involved in programmes have gained a good knowledge and relevant 'know how'. However in cases where spatial character has been underestimated (see previous column), it is not clear that European added value is achieved. The fact that Greece is isolated from the heartland of European territory, has no terrestrial borders with other countries and that TEN policies don't emphasise maritime transport have contributed to this. Delays to EU programmes for non-EU Mediterranean countries have also had a negative influence by failing to stimulate cross-border spatial policy. It is fair to say that the vocabulary of European spatial policies vocabulary has influenced the presentation of local programmes and documents, but not the way of that policy is shaped or implemented.	A second ESDP must be more concrete, specializing in the principles, aims and goals of the first. First there should be an assessment of the influence that the first ESDP has had on every country. It should express the aspirations of local communities especially the most isolated and marginal ones. Using the principles of sustainability and territorial cohesion (incorporated in the European constitution) ESDP 2 could be the vehicle to influence sectoral policies at European, national and regional level, by including environmental awareness more explicitly in regional or national development policies. The introduction of a clear territorial policy approach to Structural Funds regulations could oblige or stimulate national and local authorities to incorporate the added value of European spatial policies. Institutional building: ESDP 2 should contribute also by creating rational and democratic administrative structures at national level, although keeping its optional character. New governance forms, transparency and participation principles are hardly incorporated when bureaucratic practices resist. For example, within the ESPON framework, a study of institutional national systems and legislative tools could be conducted to evaluate efficiency and eventually create indicators.
IRELAND from Irish Planning Institute (IPI)	Most professional planners, if not all, would be aware of the preparation and publication of the ESDP, if not in itself, then through the extensive referencing to this document in the National Spatial Strategy, published by the Irish Department of the	Many Planning Departments are involved in cross-border projects under programmes such as INTERREG, RECITE, and TERRA. Also many are involved	See the answer to the "existing documents and programmes" question. While the level of working involvement was high when the whole of Ireland had Objective 1 status, both	Most professional planners would consider it appropriate that the operation of, as well as, the influence of the ESDP on the workings and [in particular], the project selection process within the EU should be reviewed and

<p><i>IRELAND ntinued</i></p>	<p>Environment and Local Government, in November 2002.</p>	<p>in partnerships through the NWMA and Atlantic Arc, through which an awareness of the policies and objectives of ESDP would be well known. Not all professional planners would be involved in these programmes, so deeper awareness would be limited to key planning personnel in each department.</p>	<p>the changes in the status to 'Objective 1 in transition' and tighter fiscal restraints on discretionary expenditure mean that levels of involvement appear to have declined in more recent years.</p>	<p>assessed. Should any anomalies arise, especially as compliance with the ESDP is not considered mandatory within the EU, and the EU does not have any statutory competence within the field of planning, then these anomalies should be redressed as part of any review. The issue of giving a mandate to the EU with a competence of planning, to prepare guidance, may also be something which might be considered as part of any review. Given the general thrust and trend of the ESDP, and the time scales within which changes at this scale may reasonable be expected to be achieved, it is not anticipated that the emerging trends would indicate a major shift in the policies promoted through the ESDP.</p>
<p>ITALY from Associazione Nazionale degli Urbanisti e dei Pianificatori Territoriali e Ambientali (AssUrb) [National Association of Town, Spatial and Environmental Planners]</p> <p><i>ITALY continued</i></p>	<p>The ESDP has never generated much interest among politicians, practitioners and administrators in Italy. Since its drafting and adoption no real dissemination or debate has taken place, and still nowadays the ESDP remains an unknown document for many planners.</p>	<p>Until the first draft of the ESDP appeared, there was almost total indifference among Italian planners for the possible new role of the European institutions in spatial planning. Much more attention was devoted to the possible application of European programmes such as INTERREG, Urban or the Structural Funds, but no real national consultation or debate started.</p> <p>The few who showed some interest in the document were geographers and economists who analysed the ESDP for its technical implications more than for the real political and institutional implications, so as for the impact that the ESDP might generate on the existing European spatial planning cultures. As a result ESDP was described as a document which offered a vague description of the European territory and generic recommendations, thus neither proposing any</p>	<p>There are no doubts that the lacking debate existing nowadays in Italy on the implication of a future European spatial planning culture largely derives from the poor role played by Italian institutions during the drafting of the ESDP. During that period no real commitment was ever shown by the Italian delegation and no clear approach was highlighted³. If some interest was shown from Italian institutions this was because some topics were considered to be a national priority (i.e. the ones related to cultural heritage).</p> <p>Till 1998 the document remained in the hands of few people of Italstat⁴. It was with its approval that the Minister of Public Works took over the competence of the ESDP and gave it to Dicoter (Department of territorial co-ordination of the same ministry). Unfortunately Dicoter never contributed to a real dissemination of the document, nor used the ESDP as an occasion for promoting a new role in the territorial</p>	<p>The low level of interest generated by the ESDP in Italy has several causes; on the one hand a lack of political will to deal with European matters on the national level in the light of a more co-ordinated spatial development, on the other hand the incapacity of administrators to understand the importance of the document and foster its dissemination. Practitioners also have their responsibilities which reside in the uncertain and still confused professional education which allows many different professionals to act as planners without a sufficient background in spatial planning.</p> <p>The ESDP also points out the weak cultural tradition of national co-ordination in territorial and spatial development. The planning culture in Italy "has a strong architectural flavour and a concern with urban design, townscape and building control⁵", which consequently tends to refuse any perspective of a European scheme that would move the planning approach from the local to the continental scale. This cultural situation is not a prerogative of Italy but it is a significant characteristic of Mediterranean Member</p>

² Rusca, 1998

³ "...the composition and attitude of the Italian CSD delegation would continue to be fluid" - Faludi & Waterhout, 2002

⁴ Italian Society for Infrastructure

⁵ EU Compendium on Spatial Planning

<p>ITALY continued</p>		<p>clear vision for the European territory nor solutions for its future. According to them the ESDP showed the “crude rationality of a Scheme²⁶”.</p> <p>The technical judgement might also be right, but no considerations were done on the political implication, having a Council of ministers (although “informal”) which for the first time came together to adopt a spatial development perspective. This fact deserves more attention and a critical analysis of the implications, which are not only political, but refer more to the growing importance that the “territory” will have in the process of European integration and which is clearly connected to the tasks of spatial planners. If these aspects are not correctly emphasised, then the ESDP might remain a generic document and the attention will be focused solely on those programmes which can be implemented within the existing national framework of planning instruments (i.e. in Italy the Urban or INTERREG programmes).</p>	<p>management. It seemed that the priority was to prevent any divulgation of the ESDP, to maintain all competences in European affairs at the ministry. Another reason for the poor dissemination of the ESDP is to be found in the difficulty of most Italians to read foreign languages and although a hard copy of the ESDP in Italian once appeared, this was never published on the website. An informal request to the European Commission to publish the Italian version together with the English, French and German on the Inforegio website never obtained any result and still nowadays no file version can be downloaded from internet.</p> <p>In 2000 Dicoter proposed creating a network of institutions with the task of disseminating the ESDP but to that proposal some Italian regions reacted quite negatively since it should have been financed with funds derived from INTERREG programmes. The Italian regions proposed to create a committee to take over the task of the dissemination of the ESDP, collaborating with the Ministry within the CSD, and consulting the ministry in various programmes such as INTERREG III and especially ESPON. The aim was to link more closely the regional competences on town and spatial planning to the European development perspective.</p> <p>In 2001 the National Committee of Spatial Development (CNSS), consisting of representatives of all Italian regions, was established at the ministry. Despite the commitment shown by the CNSS in various occasions (providing a</p>	<p>States which all share low regulation planning systems and which did not actively react on the ESDP⁶. Nowhere in South Europe was the ESDP really accepted, nor was there any attempt from governments to implement it (the initial refusal of Spain to join the ESPON programme is just an example).</p> <p>This will have implications for the future of the spatial cohesion of Europe even if steered by “informal” policies or documents. The contribution that spatial planning will give to the building of Europe will be fundamental, yet all European countries will be called upon to build a new form of governance derived from the various local practices and from the necessity to achieve more political cohesion.</p>
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⁶ “Clearly, the ESDP process can be understood in these terms. [...] For low-regulation countries, sitting on the fence is better [...]. In the ESDP process, Southern Europeans have indeed sat on the fence.” Faludi, 2001

			<p>second delegate within the CSD, consulting the ministry on the pre-selection of INTERREG 3B projects, participating in the assessment of ESPON projects, etc.) the ministry never really accepted this kind of "interference" and consequently never took advantage of the expertise of the CNSS for linking the local planning competences to a more structured national territorial co-ordination and to an emerging European spatial planning.</p> <p>Since then some steps forward were made in the knowledge of the ESDP among planners and local administrators. This was mostly due to the necessity to confront the ESDP when drafting INTERREG III projects and therefore the approach to the scheme remained that of an applicants' manual.</p>	
<p>MALTA from Malta Chamber of Planners (MaCP)</p> <p><i>MALTA continued</i></p>	<p>The level of awareness concerning European Spatial Planning among MaCP members and Maltese planners varies according to the personal initiative and interest taken by the individuals. In other words, whilst some planners are quite knowledgeable of the European Spatial Planning scenario, others may be more occupied and focused on their daily working routines.</p> <p>It is evident to us however that awareness is growing and so is interest. This is exemplified by the inclination for Maltese planners to promote approaches to national spatial planning, which seek to integrate multi-sectoral inputs, along lines promoted in the ESDP. On the other hand, the political will for an integrated approach to spatial planning appears to be lacking. Possibly the only public agency which is in a position to be highly aware of the implications of the ESDP, is the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA). For instance, on the 10th anniversary of its establishment in late-2003, the MEPA chose to organise a public lecture in which Andreas Faludi was invited to speak about the ESDP.</p>	<p>Here again, the Maltese planners who have shown initiative and interest are aware of the ESDP document, the ESPON document, and the INTERREG, including the INTERREG III. However their knowledge cannot be of a practical nature at this stage due to the isolation element and lack of clear cut examples of practical programme applications, which in most cases will require commitments made through transnational co-operation. This is especially the case in regards of information being communicated to planners regarding Government projects and proposals for EU funds, and the Government's interaction with the Commission. Such information is not as yet readily available to planners, as is probably the case in other Member States. This limits the level of knowledge-acquisition on national long-term funding projects and plans vis-à-vis the EU. The Maltese planning profession is not</p>	<p>This area is the most limited as experiences can only increase by inclusion and practice in this field. Most Maltese planners are involved in local planning work and only partially involved in EU affairs. EU Membership should help to adjust this deficiency, once Malta co-operates more intensely with other Members States.</p>	<p>The aspirations of Maltese planners are to become highly participative European professionals who intend and expect to participate fully in transnational initiatives. They understand that an important principle of the ESDP is to bring together under one umbrella of opportunity, initiatives concerning sustainable/balanced economic and social development, cohesion policy, and quality of life.</p> <p>The successful attainment of the objectives of economic and social cohesion initiatives is at the heart of the Maltese future actions, as the country is an isolated region that needs to be effectively integrated, among other things, through competent planning endeavours which provide the local inhabitants with the same opportunities to develop as their better positioned counterparts in the EU. This is a primary goal that should remain at the core of the ESDP 2 – a firm commitment against marginalisation which promotes the integration and development of isolated and/or low-income regions. For this reason, Maltese</p>

	<p>The awareness process has been difficult and slow to develop for a number of reasons namely:</p> <p>The recent confirmation of Malta's EU membership [in May 2004], following a vigorous public debate, which means that Maltese planners have yet to explore/discover the possibilities made available through the ESDP.</p> <p>Maltese planners (through the MaCP) are putting in a lot of energy in order to seek the official recognition [in Malta] of planning as an independent profession, through positive pressure on the Government for the enactment of a law regulating the activities of planners. [The MaCP prepared a draft for such an Act more than three years ago].</p> <p>Malta is somewhat isolated from the rest of Europe – being an island in the centre of the Mediterranean. This makes the taking and following of collaborative initiatives involving countries in the mainland rather difficult.</p>	<p>always directly involved or represented in key public agencies, given that the planning profession is not yet firmly established.</p>		<p>planners seem to be in agreement that ESDP 2 should give more space than ESDP 1, to the consideration of problems which are specific to small relatively isolated island-states/regions.</p> <p>ESDP 1 tends to focus on accessibility as the main problem which has to be addressed in order for such communities to be integrated with the rest of Europe. However transport-and-communications is simply one of a complex combination of factors which have to be taken into consideration in the formulation of policy for sustainable small-island socio-economic development.</p>
<p>NETHERLANDS from Beroepsvereniging van Nederlandse Stedebouwkundigen en Planologen (BNSP) <i>[Professional Association of Dutch Town & Physical Planners]</i></p>	<p>The awareness is very limited. By far the most planners are involved in local practice. Many feel national level of spatial strategies too far away, so European affairs are for many planners out of sight. They know about its existence in a rather vague way.</p>	<p>Also very limited, depending on personal professional interest. The spatial planners working on the national level and the regional level are much more involved. On the national level, the preparation of the "5th Note" started with broad discussions about the international context. The final draft did not succeed in keeping this focus. Currently the role and function of the National Planning Agency attracts too much attention to administrative and competence subjects. Rather many planners (no figures) working on the provincial level are aware of the strategic impact of European initiatives</p>	<p>Although it seems that planners in the Netherlands are relatively strongly involved in INTERREG projects, this only concerns a minority. Most (by far) are locally-oriented, whether they are working for a municipality or in a private office. Also only a very limited number of private planners follow European initiatives and apply for jobs in tender procedures.</p>	<p>Inclusion of ESPON and INTERREG results in new ESDP, allowing for more concrete, mapped ideas and proposals. Discussions should result in clarity about developments axes, urban networks, ecological main structure and infrastructure for transportation, giving due respect to natural and cultural variety.</p>
<p>POLAND from Towarzystwo Urbanistów Polskich (TUP) <i>[Polish Society of Town Planners]</i></p> <p><i>POLAND continued</i></p>	<p>The members of TUP have generally a modest but differentiated knowledge on the main spatial planning issues in the EU member-countries and the ways in which these issues are being tackled. This knowledge is relatively good among urban researchers and rather poor among practitioners engaged</p>	<p>TUP prepared in the year 2000 a concise version of the ESDP document in Polish and disseminated it widely among its members. The National Strategy for Regional Development and the National Programme of Regional Development</p>	<p>As Poland does not yet belong to EU limited number of EU documents and programmes are being applied to the spatial planning practice. The experience of our members in working with EU documents and programmes is related</p>	<p>This is an awkward question to be answered in the name of TUP members as it has strong political connotations. The Board of TUP believes that most of our members support strongly the objectives underlying the present ESDP, namely: economic and social cohesion, protection of</p>

	<p>in the preparation of local physical development plans and development control.</p>	<p>for the years 2004-2006, both prepared to fit the EU requirements, made acquainted with the EU regional policy those TUP members who are involved in spatial planning on the national and regional levels. Also known are some sector policies with spatial impact such as Trans-European Networks or environment protection system "Natura 2000", which are observed in the preparation of physical development plans.</p>	<p>mainly to pre-accession assistance programmes, such as PHARE Cross-Border Cooperation Programme, PHARE Economic and Social Cohesion Programme, ISPA and SAPARD. Some were involved in INTERREG Transnational Co-operation for Spatial Development initiative concerning Baltic Sea-VASAB. There are also 13 Euroregions established along Poland border and these Euroregions are the place for cross-border cooperation, including physical development planning.</p> <p>It is necessary to emphasize that the preparation of Poland to the accession to EU already resulted in the basic change of the administrative division of the country and the establishing in the 1998 of the regional tier in the government system. The regional authorities are yet weak, lacking sound financial basis for their activities and being unable to influence effectively the central government sector development policies. Nevertheless they prepared the first regional development strategies and programmes and are preparing regional physical development plans embedded in these strategies. The national system of statistics has been adjusted to Eurostat formats and the country divided on statistical units corresponding to NUTS II and NUTS III. Efforts are made to develop institutions and financial instruments necessary for implementation of regional development policies and the idea of good governance based on principles of partnership and subsidiarity is slowly catching ground.</p>	<p>natural resources and cultural heritage and more balanced competitiveness of the European territory. We think that our members in majority accept the 60 policy options presented in the present ESDP. However we are conscious of the fears our members may have with regard to the policy option 1 (strengthening of several zones of global economic integration in the EU, equipped with high-quality, global functions and services). Poland is a country lagging behind present EU member countries in economic development and many TUP members fear that a new ESDP adopt policies that would result in remaining of Poland forever on the periphery of EU in the socio-economic sense.</p> <p>Therefore TUP members' expectations and wishes with regard to a possible ESDP 2 are that it will emphasize strongly the need of increasing the economic cohesion of the EU territory and reduction of disparities between the core and periphery. Our members will be also glad to see in the ESDP 2 a clear link between spatial and other development policies, expressed in more operational terms than it is the case in the present document.</p> <p>Of course we expect that in a new document the whole territory of the expanded EU will have equal treatment and the chapter 5 of the part A will disappear with issues pertinent to the present accession countries incorporated and discussed in the main body of the document.</p>
<p>PORTUGAL from Associação de Urbanistas Portuguesas (AUP) <i>[Association of Portuguese Town Planners]</i></p>	<p>Only a few members, mostly academics, are truly aware of its existence and relevance.</p>	<p>Even fewer really know what it is about</p>	<p>Very little, except those few involved in INTERREG Programmes, or in other international projects mostly with Spain and in transportation</p>	<p>Most of the attention is paid to the TEN</p>

<p>SLOVENIA from Društvo Urbanistov in Prostorskih Planerjev Slovenije (DUPPS) <i>[Town & Spatial Planners Association of Slovenia]</i></p>	<p>To the ordinary member of the planning association, they are known only as inputs of the neighbouring parts of Europe to the Strategic Spatial Development Plan of the Republic of Slovenia.</p>	<p>Awareness is very limited.</p>	<p>Again, the only experience with it is at the National Office for Spatial Planning within the Ministry for Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy.</p>	<p>Again, at the same highest national level there might be expectations to actively participate in the preparation process, where some Slovenian interest might be included.</p>
<p>SPAIN from Asociación Española de Técnicos Urbanistas (AETU) <i>[Spanish Association of Town Planners]</i></p>	<p>Spanish planners have little knowledge of the programs and documents of European planning and carry out their work completely disconnected from them. In our opinion, the total disconnection between the Spanish town planners and the European order derives from the attitude of the planner in private practice who considers that European programs are relevant only to universities and institutions dedicated to planning education, not to local and practical planning. The individual planner thinks that these documents are beyond their reach as independent professionals. ESDP is linked to requirements that are usually irrelevant to most town planners.</p> <p>Another problem is the lack of real connection between Spanish authorities and professionals and other European professionals largely due to the geographical situation of Spain. Spain has few border territories as a peninsula, which also limits possibilities in some European programs. We detect a total ignorance of the programs and European documents when considering that it is an environment that doesn't have incidence in the real practice, except for the program URBAN 21.</p>			<p>Need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - keep in mind territories with few frontiers like Spain. - promote axes or trans-border elements with international relevance as half of connection like the one on the Milky Way - improve connections and contacts between Spanish town planners and the rest of Europe; AETU proposes to encourage the establishment of a network of professional & administrative contacts among various countries to increase knowledge of the professional town planners in Europe. Planners who were interested in these projects could contact planners in other countries, to create work groups bidding for work under European programs. <p>In addition, to counter the problem of poor understanding of European programs and documents, an alternative would be to make AETU a means of diffusion of these programs (not just through the Official Journal of the EU) publicising future calls through its own website</p>
<p>UNITED KINGDOM from Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)</p> <p><i>UNITED KINGDOM continued</i></p>	<p>Awareness tends to be focused upon initiatives associated with funding programmes such as INTERREG, rather than with the spatial policy initiatives that lie behind them. There is an increasingly strong, but indirect awareness through the introduction of spatial planning concepts and vehicles by national governments at UK, Scotland, Wales and Ireland level. Understanding of spatial development remains very weak within the profession, despite a strong lead from the Institute, which</p>	<p>Awareness is clearly strongest in those areas and specialisms that are eligible for forms of EU support and in fields such as environmental assessment and nature conservation in which EU Directives and policy have the strongest impacts.</p>	<p>There are two main forms of experience. At a national, regional and strategic level there is significant awareness of documents: for example regional plans are required to have regard to the ESDP. The ESDP has certainly influenced spatial plans for Wales, Scotland and Ireland and, to some extent, London. There is also a growing awareness of programmes as more and more public bodies engage in exchange</p>	<p>1) A new document needs to be less "top down" than the ESDP and to use the wealth of experience gained through EU programmes such as INTERREG to infuse European policy with a more "bottom-up" approach. 2) In doing so, to produce a document that is more accessible because it draws upon experience at the local and regional level. 3) In doing so, also to give stronger definition to the good but rather vague policy constructs of ESDP:</p>

	<p>has built it into its core principles.</p>		<p>and collaboration such as INTERREG 2C.</p>	<p>for example “polycentric development” is often quoted as a principle with little clarity as to its meaning (often it is used to suggest decentralisation for example).</p> <p>4) Clearly it must address the profound consequences of the new EU membership and potential consequences of further new membership.</p> <p>5) The effort to manage the spatial consequences of sectors such as agriculture has been advancing, not least in the UK where the new forms of spatial plan are addressing health, education, housing, safety and other sectoral issues. However, this process is a major long-term struggle which needs to be reinforced by a new, contemporary ESDP lead.</p> <p>6) The definition of spatial planning is that it replaces “space of places” with “space of flows”. Certainly transnational movement and especially transnational flows of people is an issue of the first importance, which demands a new European level response. There are also huge changes implicit in shifts in transport modes: for example the competition between short haul international air and rail trips. This, in itself, is of sufficient urgency to justify a new ESDP 2.</p> <p>7) Several issues, notably cross-border collaboration, have been driven by funding programs rather than policy: this can lead to distortions. ESDP 2 should address such matters.</p> <p>8) The central importance of some spatial drivers, such as airports, international stations and ports, has been reinforced in the last few years and needs re-examination in the ESDP 2.</p> <p>9) In the UK the whole strategic spatial planning approach is in need of refreshment and being brought up to date. Revision of the ESDP through a consultative process and in an accessible form would be an excellent vehicle for this.</p>
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