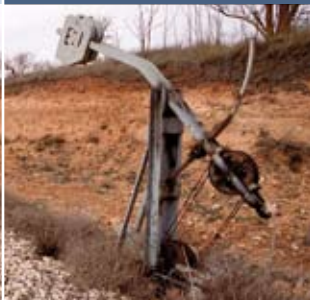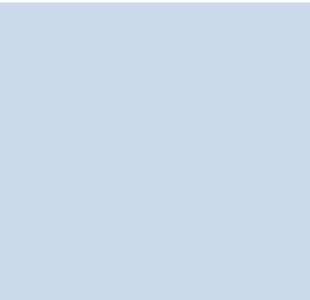# The institutionalisation of European spatial planning

Bas Waterhout

TUDelft

The institutionalisation of
European spatial planning

The institutionalisation of European spatial planning

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Technische Universiteit Delft,
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Preface

About seven years ago Andreas Faludi and I wrote in the book *The Making of the European Spatial Development Perspective – No Masterplan!* that the institutional capacity that the ESDP had created was "in danger of evaporating" (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002: 177). This was also the conviction of the author of the ESDP, the Committee of Spatial Development, which consisted of representatives of the then fifteen Member States plus the European Commission. During a CSD seminar in 1998, organised by the Austrian Presidency, serious questions were raised like: Who really needs European spatial planning? What can European spatial planning achieve and with what instruments? What are the necessary arrangements for European spatial planning? And also, 'we have been very focused on the ESDP text; we missed the wider picture!' and 'we must become more professional!' (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002: 169). Clearly, serious doubts existed.

It was against this shaky background that we, whilst committing ourselves to the sake of European spatial planning, argued in the epilogue of our book for further research aiming to clarify the enterprise of European spatial planning. For this we emphasised the need for a better understanding of the process of European integration in general. In particular we pointed to the emerging middle range theories that used concepts showing similarity to those that academics writing about planning were accustomed to such as networks, discourses and governance.

This PhD thesis follows in these footsteps. Having been written by one of the authors under the supervision of the other, one would expect this thesis to follow-up this early account of the ESDP process. And indeed the focus is on the post-ESDP period, from 1999 until now. Also one would expect this work to continue the story of the ESDP planners and tell about the twisted roads followed to finally arrive at the Territorial Agenda of the European Union, which as the reader may know, was adopted by the EU ministers responsible for spatial planning and development on the 25th of May 2007 in Leipzig. This indeed is addressed to some extent, but do not expect the style and detail that characterised the previous work. This book is a collection of articles and therefore has a different gestation process and does not tell a story from A to Z. What this book is about, however, is merely the issue concerning the institutional capacity of the ESDP and whether this has evaporated or not. The fact that this book exists at all suggests it has not.

Delft/Amsterdam, December 2007

Acknowledgements

The message of this PhD thesis is that political processes such as those leading to the ESDP and Territorial Agenda are long, bumpy and twisty and in general hard to design. The same counts for writing a PhD thesis. This may sound a bit surprising to non-planners who may expect planners to be able to 'plan the future'. Well, if this is what planners ought to do, then, I definitely qualify as one of the worst. However, the ESDP planners, too, did not like the idea of a masterplan. This reminds me of one of my first and most important lessons during my planning education, by indeed, Andreas Faludi, that plans (and for that sake also the planners that make them) need to be flexible!

A high degree of flexibility is what both of my supervisors, Andreas Faludi and Wil Zonneveld have been showing and I need to thank them for that. Had I listened a little more often to them and followed-up on their advice, this PhD thesis would have been finished long ago. However, a PhD thesis is a strange thing, and once the storyline does not sound or feel 'right', any persuasive storytelling about the future will prove to be just futile. Each PhD process has its own dynamics and a supervisor can only point out what he or she thinks is the right way. Andreas and Wil have pointed out many ways to me, but ultimately it is the PhD student who should find his or her own way. Apparently, this then is my way. The result is completely different from what I ever had in mind or expected, but nevertheless I feel comfortable with it. So apparently, you can grow in these things and learn a bit along the way.

I have been lucky with my supervisors, but also with the course of events. And although the prospects sometimes looked grim, in hindsight I have been able to work under very favourable conditions that many others could only wish for. OTB and in particular the department of Urban and Regional Development, is a pleasant place to work with great facilities and nice colleagues. It also has its own institutions like having lunch together at 12:00 sharp! As this institution is hard to change it may make life a bit predictable but at the same time always allows for some relaxation and a good atmosphere. Special thanks in this respect should go to Arie with whom I have shared a room since arriving at OTB.

I have also been lucky to meet and work with many nice colleagues and friends during projects, conferences and elsewhere. In a multitude of ways these people have contributed to the PhD. Not in the least I have to thank Rachel Heap who turned my English into proper UK English while deadlines were nearing. Combined with Chapters 3 to 7, which were already published, this is the only sentence that she has not checked. Obviously, any textual mistake has to be blamed on the author himself.

Yet, not everything has been just luck. In a way, as also this study will show for the institutionalisation of the European spatial planning discourse, if an idea, like for example 'doing a PhD', is strong enough and if the person involved feels really committed to it, my conclusion is that one way or another in the end stamina will be rewarded.

Stamina sometimes also includes making sacrifices. In this particular case it has been others more than myself who have made the sacrifices. To work on this thesis I sometimes needed isolation to get into a 'flow'. Once this happened I wanted to steam on. Because I have never been able to 'plan' these flows or predict them, over the years I have turned many appointments and promises down, making me sometimes quite an unreliable partner, friend, brother or son. However, since this really has benefited my own progress, this is the appropriate place to once again say sorry to all the friends, family, colleagues and people involved, but also to say, thank you for letting me go, it was really helpful.

Sander and Ralph, you have been much faster in many things that is, but it is still unique to see that each of us now holds a PhD. Although our years as roommates are long gone now and we all have moved in different directions, even to different countries, our bond is and remains strong.

Then there is one person that I need to thank in particular. Linda, you have been extremely patient with me, and have been a stimulus all the time and in every sense. Life is great with you.

There are two more people on whom I could always count and which need to be thanked. Also in this respect I am very lucky. Mum and Dad, you are great parents.

Prologue

A talk taking place a year or two ago.

- And what do you do?
- Well, at the moment I am working on my PhD thesis on 'European spatial planning'.
- Ehm???
- It is a policy 'in the making' that aims, amongst other things, to reduce the unforeseen and unwanted spatial impacts of already existing EU policies such as the common agricultural, transport, regional and environmental policies.
- Unwanted spatial impacts? Could you give me an example?
- Well, in the Netherlands we have had a lot of trouble with the EU Air Quality Directive. In fact it has cost the construction companies and governments millions if not billions of euros due to the halt to all building that occurred once the policy came into force.
- Wow, how could they do that?
- That depends on who you are referring to by 'they'. In fact, it is not the EU that should be blamed. I mean the same policy applies to your country and you had little trouble with it, did you?
- Not that I know off.
- In this case we have to blame my own Dutch government that was sleeping whilst translating, or transposing as the official term is, the EU directive into national legislation.
- Huh! Come on, you don't mean that!
- Yes, I do. Every EU member state is itself responsible for the way it transposes EU directives and regulations into national legislation. The point is, much of our as well as your national legislation is highly influenced by EU regulations, but we do not recognise it.
- Interesting.
- Except of course when things go wrong, like with the air quality directive and, some time ago, with the Habitat and Birds directives. The funny thing is that in such cases our politicians are very quick to blame 'Brussels'. It is quite a smart strategy, but not if, at the same time, they want people to vote in favour of, say, the European Constitution.
- Ha-ha, amazing! Hey, but what has happened in other countries? I know London is having this congestion charge now, which I thought had some-

thing to do with the air quality too, doesn't it?

- Yes, funny you should mention London, because there the air quality is probably even worse than in the Netherlands and to meet the thresholds, which, by the way, are determined at EU level, by 2010 they should really make a bigger effort. In the Netherlands the air quality exceeds the thresholds too, but, to put it simply, on top of that our government linked air quality to spatial plans. This means that every new spatial plan should be evaluated against its possible influence on air quality.
- So, even if a plan has no negative influence on the air itself it can be rejected?
- Yep. And it will, because in this respect our Council of State acts holier than the Pope.
- Not so good, but they did not do this in other countries?
- Nope.
- Heeehee, that sounds stupid! Pfew, I really need some beer to digest this…

(…)

- Hey, but on the other hand, if the air quality is so bad in the Netherlands shouldn't you be happy with this policy? I mean, it may save a few lives.
- Yes, that is the other side of the coin. And perhaps maybe we really just are some dirty little country. But try saying that to a construction company or municipality, ha-ha!
- I don't think they will be laughing…
- No, probably not, but if I am correct the government is trying to find a way out of this.
- Sounds like the least they could do.
- But do you know what the strange thing is, these EU directives apply just as much to highly urbanised areas as to the northern part of say Finland.
- So, the EU is not very sensitive to geographical variety and diversity?
- Ha-ha, yes, to put it mildly! No, the core issue of the EU is creating a Single European Market and for that it treats the territory as a 'level playing field', as if it is a blank map that has yet to be filled in.
- And what about transferring all this money to lagging regions then?
- Yes, that is regional or cohesion policy, which is supposed to reduce the biggest disparities between rich and poor, but also aims to 'repair' market failure. Obviously, the single market is more profitable for central and easy accessible regions than for peripheral or declined regions.
- Hmm, quite interesting this research of yours. But you said something about… what was it…
- European spatial planning?
- Yes! What has that to do with this?
- Well, that remains to be seen, but as you might have guessed, one of its

objectives is to bring some more coherence to EU policies from a spatial point of view. Or better still, since this will not be easy, to raise attention for the territorial dimension of EU policies.
- What more?
- A second objective relates to the fact that many geographical structures transcend national borders and require some form of co-ordination.
- You mean like motorways or railways crossing borders?
- Yes, for example, although such processes can often be dealt with bilaterally, between countries, and therefore do not really require co-ordination at a transnational or EU level. But you could say that, for example, large river basins, like the Rhine or Danube, form a spatial system and require some coordination at a higher level. The same counts for some nature reserves.
- Hmm, aren't there any environmental policies that deal with these issues?
- Yes, the Water Framework Directive and the Natura 2000 network do this but not always in a spatially sensible way. I mean they are developed in separate policy trajectories and both exert influence on space, but piled up, they cover partly overlapping territories, which puts increasing strain on regional and local administrations to deal with these regulations in proper ways.
- Ok, so if I see it right, the combination of such policies reduces the room for decision making over spatial issues at lower levels?
- Yes, that is what it looks like.
- Hmm, not really a favourable situation.
- No. But another issue that European planners are concerned with is that of for example urban networks. You know, the idea of a network or cluster of cities that compete and complement each other and by doing so become stronger and function more or less as a coherent urban system.
- Like?
- Well, often used examples are the RhineRuhr area or the Randstad.
- Yes, got it.
- Now, European planners also consider such networks at an even higher scale like that of northwest Europe for example. They refer to this area as the pentagon, referring to the five cities that demarcate it. It is roughly the area between London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Hamburg. What they want is to develop, or at least stimulate the development of, other strong and highly urbanised zones at other locations in Europe to counterbalance the economic dominance of this so-called pentagon. What about that?
- Wooha, now that is what I call a brave attempt! Man, I never thought of Europe like this.
- Well, look where we are. Somewhere in the centre of Europe attending some conference. Seems far from home, but they have the same money. Perhaps the food is a bit strange, but the beer and certainly the weather are much better. And all that within two hours by plane!

- Hmm. And, now you mention it, this is about the fourth time this year that I am on such a trip.
- And that does not include holidays, does it?
- No, adding them would make a really weird picture.
- Even by car you can get quite far. Now that I think about it, last year I went four or five times to the Alps skiing and cycling and also twice to the Ardennes.
- So, seems like Europe is a nice playground, doesn't it. Maybe this idea of a, what did you call it, a network of cities does make some sense then.
- In a way it probably does yes, but it is hard to pin it down. Perhaps funny in this respect is an American author who speaks of an emerging Generation-E. This generation E refers to a group of Europeans between their 20s and 40s who travel across Europe, make friends in many countries, communicate in English and by email, internet and mobile phone and in so doing adopt a European identity on top of their national and regional or local identities and could be regarded as a new type of 'true European'.
- Sounds a bit like us…
- Uhuh.

(…)

- But then, I don't think I've got the full picture yet. I mean, what do European spatial planners do?
- Ha-ha, good question. What do they do? Hmm, they developed for example the European Spatial Development Perspective or ESDP. Ever heard of that?
- No.
- And neither did most of us. Anyway, it was adopted in 1999 by the then fifteen EU ministers responsible for spatial planning and in a way this ESDP can be seen as a first step towards a genuine European spatial planning policy, whatever that may be.
- It was not very clear on this?
- Well, the ESDP contains a lot of ideas and thoughts. For example this pentagon and the idea of developing other networks of cities came from the ESDP. Another idea is called 'the spatial approach' which refers to how planning should be executed according to ESDP plans. In general, however, the document is rather abstract. Some people have referred to it as a menu list because it contains so many ideas, and not always coherent ones, to choose from.
- You say the ministers adopted it? So it is an official document?
- Hmm, no, long story, but because the EU does not have any competency in spatial planning the ESDP is an informal and non-binding document. Haha, now you've got me thinking about it, if it had become a binding policy there would have been zero chance that it would ever had come about anyway.

For sure.
- Why is that?
- Because member states do not want to lose their sovereignty as regards the development and planning of their territory.
- Makes sense.
- However, the funny thing is that in spite of its informal status, member states have let themselves be really inspired by the ESDP. Even DG Regio, a department of the European Commission, is pretty much influenced by it.
- So, are you saying they are really developing these city networks?
- Haha, no that would have been really funny. No they are just reinterpreting some of the ESDP messages that they like or can use to their own avail. This is generally how such strategic plans work. If you are lucky, or if you make a really good plan, people start to use it as a frame of reference.
- Hmm, sounds as if planners have little control.
- Yes exactly. Formally speaking they are not really part of EU policy making, which they nevertheless try to influence.
- Hmm, but this ESDP does not really work then?
- Well, you never know how a plan eventually will work out in reality. The fact that at least some countries and organisations take note of it and let themselves be inspired by it, is already quite something. And mind you, if a plan acquires the status of a frame of reference in the heads of decision makers, it becomes a really powerful tool.
- Hmm, yes, I can see that. But now that it looks like it has not really been able to get that status, what is left for planning?
- Well, they did some other things as well. Helped by the ESDP they set up a programme that stimulates co-operation at transnational scale. This is called INTERREG. Another programme they set up aims to gather more knowledge and data about the European territory. This is called ESPON.
- Okay, seems like a good strategy.
- Yes, it probably is. INTERREG seems quite successful. ESPON is just a few years old with the first projects just having been finished, so we can't say much about it yet.
- You want another beer?
- Yes, and something to eat perhaps?

(…)

- Turning back to your story. I think it is quite fascinating, but if I listen to you you seem very committed to it.
- Well, yes, I guess you are right and that you could characterise my role as a committed follower. In a way I am even participating in the process through my involvement in various commissioned studies for ESPON, but also for the Dutch ministry.

- But do you agree with these European spatial planners?
- That depends of course on which 'European spatial planner' you speak to. I mean, since the last accession we now have 25 countries and they all have their own view. But as a spatial planner myself, I feel quite committed to the general objectives of the ESDP and indeed share the opinion that somehow the EU should consider the territorial dimension of its policies.
- What do you think such a policy should look like?
- Hmm, difficult. Ideally speaking, a comprehensive plan to which all other policy fields would respond is the way to go. But somehow, this world is not ideal and neither are the plans it produces. So we have to look in other directions too. What it comes down to is changing the way policies are developed in the EU.
- So, change the system?
- Well, setting up new organisations and issuing new legislation is perhaps not what people are waiting for. No, the key is in finding a smart way to gradually influence existing policies in such a way that the involved sectoral policy makers agree with it or even adopt planning principles without noticing.
- Wow, that is quite challenge. What kind of skills do you need then?
- Good question. Quite a variety of skills I think.
- I think so too.

(...)

- Hey, I think the food is ready, shall we go and eat?
- Good idea, but this is really a good story. Do you think you can send me the book when you it's ready?
- Yes, sure. But, knowing me, it might take a year or two before I finish it.
- No matter. Don't hurry.

1 Introduction

The central question in this book is whether and how European spatial planning is becoming institutionalised? This question is relevant because the first steps towards creating spatial planning at a European level were taken some twenty years ago. This was in 1988 when France and the Netherlands decided to organise a meeting of EU ministers responsible for spatial planning in the French city of Nantes. After numerous attempts (National Spatial Planning Agency, 2000), this was the first time that planning was discussed under the umbrella of the European Community, later the European Union. Ten years later in 1999, after a long and winding process, the European Spatial Development Perspective or ESDP was adopted by the then 15 EU ministers responsible for spatial planning (CEC, 1999; Faludi & Waterhout, 2002). Although being an informal and non-binding document, the ESDP, a 87 pages document presenting three main concepts (which are further divided in 13 'policy aims' and 60 'policy options'), provided EU planners with a frame of reference for the first time and therefore marks a turning point. It is this turning point that forms the start of this research, which covers the period from 1999 to 2007. In 2007 the now 27 EU ministers responsible for spatial planning adopted the Territorial Agenda of the European Union, which may be seen as the start of a new chapter in the development and institutionalisation of European spatial planning, a chapter that begins where this book ends.

The mere fact that European spatial planners still gather, issue policy documents and set up new organisations indicates that European spatial planning has actually become institutionalised. Yet, what is unclear is to what extent it has and how well it is embedded in the EU policy-making processes? The latter, influencing EU policy-making, can be considered one of the main objectives of European planners. Another objective is to provide a policy framework for domestic planning. This research aims to shed some light on these questions and in addition aims to provide some handholds to enable European spatial planning to become more effective.

It does so by adopting an institutional perspective. In so doing the concept of institution is regarded as "a stable, valued, recurring pattern of behaviour", whereby it should be noted that institutions are always a social phenomenon and that an individual cannot be an institution. Going one step further, institutionalisation then is characterised as "the process by which organisations and procedures acquire value and stability" (Goodin, 1996: 21). Section 1.4 will further elaborate the institutional perspective.

Firstly, however, the following section will provide a brief overview of the most important achievements and events in the period from 1999 to 2007. Section 1.2 will then discuss the label 'European spatial planning' and why the use of it is judged to be appropriate. Section 1.3 introduces some basic conceptualisations about European integration and how this influences EU policy development processes (something that chapter 2 will reflect on as well, but then with more focus on spatial planning).

1.1   European spatial planning in the 2000s

Since none of the following chapters discusses the key characteristics and events in the period from 1999 until now, Autumn 2007, there is some need for a brief update, which may serve as a frame of reference for the rest of the work. This is also an appropriate place to introduce some of the basic terms and acronyms.

1.1.1   The pillars of European spatial planning

European spatial planning is organised around a number of interrelated programmes and initiatives. In May 1999, when the ESDP was published, these were: the INTERREG IIC programme, the Tampere ESDP Action Programme (TEAP) (as from September 1999) and the Study Programme on European Spatial Planning (SPESP)

Without going into details the INTERREG IIC programme, which promotes transnational cooperation in the field of spatial planning, and which ran from 1997 until 1999, was considered by European planners a true test ground for applying ESDP messages (which were already contained in draft versions of the ESDP). The programme was a so-called Community Initiative, which means that it was completely financed and controlled by the European Commission, in this case represented by the Directorate General Regio, or in short DG Regio. In the EU programming period 2000-2006 it was followed up by INTERREG IIIB, which had more or less the same objectives and way of working. Chapter 7 reviews how ESDP messages have found their way through INTERREG IIIB. The current programming period 2007-2013 will continue INTERREG IV, which has the official name of European Territorial Cooperation, or ETC.

A few months after the ESDP was published, the ministers agreed on an action programme in order to render the ESDP more concrete. This took place in the Finnish town of Tampere, and the so-called Tampere ESDP Action Programme (TEAP) included a list of twelve actions, each of which was the responsibility of either a member state or DG Regio. Most of the actions went by unnoticed, as they were already part of the member states' domestic agen-

da. Finally, the impact of the TEAP has been quite insignificant (ESPON 2.3.1/ Nordregio et al., 2007). For the sake of completeness, the TEAP is mentioned here, but is of no further concern in this book.

This is also true for the Study Programme on European Spatial Planning, which will not be analysed in this study, but its institutional relevance should be emphasised as it functioned as a pilot programme for the future European Spatial Planning Observation Network, or, in short, ESPON. ESPON, which came into operation in 2002 and is continued during the current 2007-2013 budget period of the EU, can be considered one of the major achievements of the ESDP planners. This programme is financed through the structural funds and the member states and allows a systemised analysis of spatial development trends across the European Union territory. ESPON is a network organisation with a small coordination unit located in Luxembourg, a Monitoring Committee composed of member state officials managing it and several transnational projects groups (which project proposal won the ESPON tendering process and are composed of researchers from institutes all over Europe) carrying out the more or less thirty research projects (an organisation chart with emphasis on the management structure can be found in: ESPON, 2006: 11). Having such a programme to hand was a long-lasting wish of the spatial planners dating back to the early 1990s when they commenced their work on the ESDP (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002). ESPON will not be discussed in a separate chapter, but will often be referred to for its institutional role delivering the 'evidence' for European spatial policies (Faludi & Waterhout, 2006; see also Chapter 9).

In summary current European spatial planning centres around four pillars: the ESDP, the INTERREG programme, the ESPON programme and, the most recent achievement, the Territorial Agenda of the EU. The Territorial Agenda (TA, 2007) comes with an unofficial background document, the Territorial State and Perspectives of the EU (TSP, 2007), which contains the thinking behind it. The process leading to the Territorial Agenda forms in many ways a good indication of the level of institutionalisation of spatial planning and therefore has a central, yet sometimes implicit, function in many of the following chapters. Chapter 6 explicitly addresses a certain stage in the Territorial Agenda process. The next section describes briefly how the Territorial Agenda has come about. In so doing, because of its relevance for the rest of the book, the section is a little more detailed than the rest of the chapter.

1.1.2 The Territorial Agenda

The Territorial Agenda for the EU (TA, 2007) was developed exclusively by the member states and was accepted by the EU ministers responsible for spatial development and planning on the 25th of May 2007 in Leipzig. The Territorial Agenda is a political document that does not replace the ESDP but, according

Table 1.1 Overview of the Territorial Agenda process

When	Where	Who	What	Documents
2002	Copenhagen	Danish Presidency	Interested SUD delegations invited to form Mermaid Group	None
2003, September	Brussels	SUD working Group		Expert document 'Managing the Territorial Dimension of EU Policies after Enlargement'
2004, June	Paris	French delegation	DG-meeting	None
2004, 29-30 November	Rotterdam	Dutch Presidency	Informal meeting of Ministers responsible for territorial cohesion	- Presidency conclusions - Discussion document
2005, 20-21 May	Luxembourg	Luxembourg Presidency	Informal meeting of Ministers responsible for territorial cohesion	- Presidency conclusions - Scoping document
2005, 13-14 December	London	UK Presidency	EU working level meeting Suggestion to separate TSP and TA	None
2006, 28 June	Amsterdam		Stakeholders conference on territorial cohesion	First draft Territorial State and Perspectives (TSP)
2006-2007	Espoo, Berlin	Finnish, German Presidencies	Several DG-meetings discussing drafts of the Territorial Agenda	Several draft versions of: - TA - TSP
2007, 24-25 May	Leipzig	German Presidency	Agreement of informal meeting of ministers responsible for spatial planning and development	- Territorial Agenda EU - Leipzig Charter

to the TA itself, complements it.

The process leading to the Territorial Agenda started in the second half of 2002 when the Danish Presidency invited the so-called 'Mermaid Group', consisting of interested member state delegations, to a meeting in Copenhagen (hence the name 'Mermaid Group') to discuss the possibility of territorial cohesion becoming a formal key objective of the EU under Article 3 of the EU Constitution.

At this time the organisational setting was less than ideal, as DG Regio had stopped financing the informal Committee on Spatial Development (the author of the ESDP), and replaced it with the Spatial and Urban Development working group (SUD), a sub-committee of the formal Committee for Development and Conversion of the Regions (CDCR) (see also Chapter 2). The Commission took the chair of the SUD committee, which caused mistrust among the member states (who held the chair of the former CSD) and virtually left them without a platform to meet and discuss planning issues. Yet, the upcoming EU enlargement 2004 and the prospect of the European Commission getting the single 'right of initiative' to propose territorial cohesion policy once the Constitution was ratified, urged the member states to come together and made them agree on a forward defence strategy. The underlying assumption was that the Commission could not neglect the member states in future territorial cohesion policymaking.

There are several key moments in the development of the Territorial Agenda, as shown in Table 1.1. The first occasion of significance was at a meeting of the SUD working group where a so-called expert document (written by an external consultant – SUD, 2003) was discussed. Then, interestingly, because it did not have the presidency, the French organised a so-called DG-meeting (involving high level officials) in June 2004 in Paris. This further pulled off the process and made the Dutch feel confident enough to organise a ministerial meeting during their presidency term. In Rotterdam the ministers agreed on a political agenda until 2007. They also agreed on the need for a short 'evidence-based synthesis document' drawing on the results of ESPON and other research. This should offer other institutions and stakeholders insight into the 'territorial state of the European Union' (Faludi & Waterhout, 2005).

The subsequent Luxembourg Presidency organised a second ministerial meeting and tabled a so-called 'Scoping Document (…) for the assessment of the territorial state and perspectives of the EU', which was based on the previous Dutch discussion document, which in turn was based on the SUD Expert document. Under the UK Presidency relatively little attention was paid to territorial issues, as it turned its focus to the concept of sustainable communities and the acceptance of the Bristol Accord (ODPM, 2005). Nevertheless, an EU working level meeting agreed to extract the policy observations from the evidence-based document and to compile them into a separate document: the Territorial Agenda for the EU.

After the UK presidency the Austrians took over and after them the Finns. While the Austrians organised a seminar on 8 and 9 June 2006 in Baden around a document called 'Governance of territorial Strategies: going beyond strategy documents' (Austrian Federal Chancellery, 2006), the writing on the Territorial Agenda and Territorial State and Perspectives went on.

After it turned out that many member states were not able to organise national stakeholder conferences it was decided by the Germans and Dutch to organise one European stakeholders conference on the June 28 in Amsterdam. Here the first draft TSP and a Guidance Note concerning the TA were presented. Amongst others representatives of the Committee of the Regions, the European Environmental Agency, DG Regio and the German federal minister Tiefensee held speeches.

The Germans, assisted by the Finns who organised a DG-meeting where drafts were discussed, carried the Territorial Agenda home. At Leipzig only the Territorial Agenda was tabled at the informal ministerial meeting on Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion for approval, the Territorial State and Perspectives therefore remaining an unofficial background document. Whereas these documents are labelled 'territorial' the next section will explain that in reality they are about European spatial planning.

1.2 European spatial planning: What's in a name?

Over the past few years many labels have been put forward in discussions on ESDP, the Territorial Agenda and also around territorial cohesion. For example, the ESDP refers to 'spatial development', whereas ESPON refers to 'spatial planning'. Moreover, the informal ministerial meetings referred to ministers responsible for territorial cohesion, for territorial development and for spatial development. Even more confusing, the latest meeting was "...on Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion", whereas the Territorial Agenda referred to ministers "...responsible for spatial planning and development" (TA, 2007: 1). So what is it that we are actually talking about and why does the label keep changing?

1.2.1 Spatial planning

Since the start of the ESDP process there has been a problem with terminology. The 'EU Compendium of spatial planning systems and policies', which reviewed the systems of the then 15 member states, has, as the title shows, settled on 'spatial planning', but notes that the term needs further explanation (CEC, 1997). It emphasises that

> ...it should be understood that spatial planning when used in the 'EU sense' does not mean precisely *'aménagement du territoire'*, town and country planning, *Raumordnung, ruimtelijke ordening* or any of a number of other terms used by member states and regions to describe their particular arrangements for managing spatial development which apply in their territories. (CEC, 1997: 23, emphasis in original)

This insightful quote makes clear that the term 'spatial planning' is new and, as Williams (1996) has indicated, forms an example of a 'Euro-English' concept. Such Euro-English concepts develop during EU policy processes to let member state representatives neutrally speak to one another at the EU level, without prejudicing or favouring a specific national or regional system. Also the quote shows that all systems have their own particular merits, specific to the local contexts of individual member states.

According to the EU Compendium spatial planning "...refers to the methods used largely in the public sector to influence the further distribution of activities in space. It is undertaken with the aims of creating a more rational territorial organisation of land uses and the linkages between them, to balance demands for development, and to achieve social and economic objectives". Furthermore, following the compendium, spatial planning "...encompasses elements of national and transnational planning, regional policy and detailed land use planning". When referring to 'spatial planning systems' the

compendium means "…the various institutional arrangements for expressing spatial planning objectives and the mechanisms employed for realising them" (CEC, 1997: 24).

1.2.2 Spatial and territorial

Despite invoking the concept of spatial planning, the issue of terminology remains complex. This complexity has been further increased with the introduction of the notion of territorial cohesion. Most of the current conceptual confusion concerns the distinction between the adjectives 'spatial' and 'territorial'. To some there is no difference between the two whereas others see clear differences and prioritise one over the other.

For example, Schön (2005: 389), a planner at the German *Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung* (a key organisation in the development of European spatial planning), states that "space and territory […are] two related but not identical concepts. Space is a more general, abstract concept, while territory is an important sub-concept of space". Schön relates territory to "clearly defined spatial units, which usually are formed as political and administrative entities, mostly with some form of self-government". Nation states are the most obvious examples, but the notion also applies to regions (provinces or counties) and municipalities. As opposed to this, space represents a more abstract notion in which administrative borders do not have a dominant role. It encapsulates the concept of territory "but additionally addresses spatial themes … like the spatial organisation of society, relationships between territories, flows of people and goods, networks, corridors, and settlement structures". (ibid.) Therefore, to Schön, space should be related to analyses and future oriented strategic thinking, whilst territory is the most important reference for implementing spatial (and territorial) policies.

The French publication *Aménager France 2020* has a slightly different, though not contradictory take on these concepts. Following this document the notion of espace refers to a functional logic. One speaks of *l'espace aérien, l'espace hertzien* or *l'espace maritime*, which are considered 'cold-blooded beings'. The notion of *territoire* instead connotes historical processes of development, the imagination, symbols. One speaks of *territoire communal*, of *territoire national*, regarded as 'warm-blooded beings' (Guigou, 2000: 11). In this sense territories themselves are regarded as *acteurs des developpements*. But also, territory in this interpretation has a somewhat wider meaning than just being a reference for implementing spatial policies. It is inextricably bound up with the people that live there, share a common history and control it, and may be understood as a part of identity. French people (and policy-makers alike) feel emotionally connected to 'their' territory and for this reason *developpement spaciale* and *developpement territoriale* have different meanings for them.

Having taken note of a German and French interpretation of space and ter-

ritory one starts to wonder what English native speakers have to say about it. The English language as such does not really differentiate between spatial and territorial. Yet, prompted by the EU debate, some recent publications by planners and geographers have shed new light on these terms. Sykes, for example, who did research in both the UK and France, suggests in the UK professional planners journal *Town & Country Planning* that the "space/territory distinction is … worth making" (Sykes, 2006: 160). He argues this not only on the basis of French experiences, but also by invoking the work of the geographer Keating who points out that physical space does not constitute the whole meaning of territory, which, according to Keating, is determined by "…the activities it encompasses and the sense of identity it engenders" (Keating, 1998, quoted in Sykes, 2006: 160). Attention is also drawn to work by Healey (1996) and the Bristol Accord on Sustainable Communities in Europe (ODPM, 2005), both of which emphasise the social construction of space and the meaning of place as part of identity. According to Sykes "…the patterns of activity of different groups and individuals and their valuing of different attributes of an area territorialise the space which constitutes it".

Albeit through different approaches, each of the views above concludes that there is indeed a difference between the terms spatial and territorial. Combining Schön's analytical interpretation with the French emotional and the UK socially constructed views, it transpires that territory refers to socially constructed places, whereas spatial refers to less clearly defined areas which seem to be of a larger scale encompassing several territories. Now, unless the EU territory is regarded as a socially constructed area (which, in fact, it is as far as its boundaries are concerned, but less so from the perspective of identity), it is appropriate to speak of 'spatial' when referring to the policies, like the ESDP, that are addressing this level of scale.

1.2.3 Planning, policy, development, cohesion

As far as terminology is concerned this leaves us with a final issue to sort out which concerns the question of whether we should speak of either spatial planning, spatial policy, spatial development policy or spatial cohesion policy, or perhaps all of them? To start with the latter, cohesion – be it economic, social or territorial – refers to reducing disparities. Evidently, the overall objective underlying cohesion is limited and either spatial planning or "…spatial development policy is more than territorial cohesion" (Schön, 2005: 389; TSP, 2007: 9). For similar reasons it could be argued that spatial planning is more than development policy, as planning involves not only development but also, for example, developing long-term strategic scenarios and issuing land use restrictions. Planning has a broader meaning than the concept of development, which is why it is more appropriate to use when related to broad policy issues discussed by the ESDP and the Territorial Agenda. To further illustrate

the broad implications of planning, attention can be drawn to the objective to add a spatial dimension to EU policies, or as Davoudi says, to spatialising European policy (Davoudi, 2005).

A last consideration could be to neglect the term 'planning' and only speak of spatial policy. Doing so would make sense from the perspective that in particular in the Member States which became part of the EU after 2004 planning may be interpreted in the old socialist style and related to plan economies with all their negative connotations. Perhaps then, talking of spatial or strategic spatial policy would make more sense. However, paying tribute to the professionals that have been and are involved, respectively, in the ESDP process and who in general consider themselves planners and refer to planning too, this study holds on to European spatial planning.

However, because each chapter has its own history and terminology has been used in a pragmatic way, European spatial planning is not always used consistently throughout. Where not, the reader knows why and also knows, with the advantage of hindsight, what was meant and how the following chapters should been interpreted. European spatial planning can thus be seen as an umbrella term.

1.3 The EU and European integration

The other issue to be discussed concerns the institutional context in which European spatial planning tries to gain shape. One cannot discuss the institutionalisation of European spatial planning without having a clearer understanding of the EU itself and the process of European integration as such.

1.3.1 What is the EU?

Answering the question of what the EU actually is, is already quite a challenge, and is so for four reasons:
1. The EU has never sought to describe or define its political character in any clear manner.
2. The EU is, and always has been, in transition.
3. The EU is a highly complex, multi-faceted system.
4. In important respects the EU is unique (Nugent, 2003: 464-465).

Without elaborating on the above it stands to reason that especially the perceived uniqueness of the EU has led to many attempts to conceptualise it. For reasons that will not be elaborated upon here, the EU is thought of as less than a state, but much more than an International Governmental Organisation such as the UN or NATO (Nugent, 2003). Other conceptualisations come closer to the essence of the EU.

Key concepts that are used to describe the EU are: federalism, state centrism and multi-level governance. Of these three, the most relevant concept for us is the concept of multi-level governance as developed by Hooghe & Marks (2001). In contrast to other concepts this has not been developed out of a comparative perspective, but evolved uniquely from studies of the EU as such. It relates to the idea that decision-making competencies are deemed to lie with not only national governments but also institutions and actors at other levels, notably the EU and sub-national levels in federal states and in some cases also regional and local authorities. Multi-level governance thus conceives the EU as a polity, or at least as a polity in the making, in which power and influence are exercised at multiple levels of government.

Within this multi-level governance setting a key issue in European integration concerns that of sovereignty. In particular, whilst developing EU policies, sooner or later the question pops up of whether to hold on to or deliberately give up some of the state's sovereignty, or in other words, independence and control. An example in the context of European spatial planning concerns the conviction of the member states to retain control over land use. The issue of sovereignty can be rendered more concrete by invoking the concepts of intergovernmentalism and supranationalism.

Intergovernmentalism relates to arrangements whereby nation states, in situations and conditions that they can control, cooperate with each other on matters of common interest. Importantly, because of the existence of control, national sovereignty is not directly undermined. Supranationalism, on the other hand, involves states working together in a manner that does not allow them to retain full control over developments. That is, states may be obliged to do things which goes against their preferences and their will because they do not have the power to stop decisions. Supranationalism thus takes inter-state relations beyond cooperation into integration, and involves some loss of national sovereignty. Chapter 2 will further discuss the implications of inter-govenmentalism and supranationalism for European spatial planning.

1.3.2 Theorising the process of European integration

Explaining the phenomenon of the EU itself has been the subject of what are called the 'grand theories'. There are two such theories: 'neofunctionalism' and 'intergovernmentalism'.

Neofunctionalism centres on the concept of spillover. Functional spillover refers to a chain reaction in which integration in one sector produces pressures for integration in adjoining and related sectors. The concept of spillover applies to the European spatial planning discourse too, which has amongst others the objective of smoothing the unwanted spatial impact of EU policies. Political spillover refers to national elites who become interested in supranational activity and decision-making. An important driver behind this mecha-

nism is that it may strengthen the position of elites. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this mechanism may also apply to ministers visiting the informal EU meetings on spatial planning. Another driving force may be the Commission, as it often seeks to widen and strengthen its position. Even internal battles between or within competing parts (i.e. Directorates-general, see Chapter 2) of the highly fragmented Commission may sometimes explain the 'Commission's' eagerness to further develop a particular branch of policy. Therefore, the EU is best regarded not as a single regime but as a series of regimes.

Intergovernmentalism as a second grand theory concentrates on nation states and national governments as key actors. This theory explains European integration based, amongst others, on the assumption of rational state behaviour (i.e. member states are assumed to use the most appropriate means to achieve their goals). Considering the focus on rational choice, intergovernmentalism may help to explain why some member states are more eager than others to work on the ESDP and the Territorial Agenda. It may raise the question of which Member States will gain and which will lose as European spatial planning becomes further institutionalised.

1.3.3 Current issues

Moving beyond theorising, it can be stated that the EU as a context for policy making is characterised by uncertainty. In particular since the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by the French and Dutch voters, the objective and meaning of European integration has been questioned in a very visible way (Laffan & Mazey, 2006). Moravcsik (2005, in Laffan & Mazey, 2006) points at the predominantly pragmatic way in which the European integration process is organised (i.e. the single market, the single currency and enlargement) and blames politicians for not taking care of developing a grand vision or scheme to legitimise this process.

However, the rejection of the Constitution together with the difficult negotiation process (rounded off in 2005) concerning the Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 and the 2004 enlargement have implicitly laid bare member states' viewpoints on the future of the EU. These viewpoints can be summarised in terms of the European model of society they adhere to. Basically, the member states are at loggerheads over two conflicting models for future European integration. One direction is to protect what has been termed the European Social Model, referring to all kinds of social securities including market protectionist measures, which has been propagated by France and Germany. The other direction, a more liberal model based on the Anglo-Saxon model, is advocated by the UK government and supported by, amongst others, the Swedes and the Dutch. This second direction is also supported by some of the new member states that are trying to raise their economies to a higher level. Southern member states, in contrast, tend to adhere to the French line of

thinking. Obviously, the discussion on European models of society must be seen also in relation to increasing processes of globalisation and the position of the EU in the world. As we will see more explicitly in Chapters 3 and 5 these models of society colour the discussions in European spatial planning, too.

   At the level of research into European integration there is movement, too. While the grand theories seek to explain the phenomenon of European integration as such, so-called middle-range theories attempt to theorise the functioning of the EU. Because of the complexity of the EU it is considered better to be less ambitious and to focus only on parts of it. In doing so, scholars, including the present author, increasingly seek inspiration in political science and its sub-disciplines. Analogous to the traditional nation state, these scholars see the EU as a polity, albeit one without the usual lines of authority and control, and consider approaches that have been used to study conventional politics just as suitable for studying the EU. The two most dominant middle-range theories to study politics in the EU are institutionalism and the policy networks approach (Nugent, 2003).

   This research, too, is primarily interested in the functioning of a specific area of policy, notably that of European spatial planning, which is not even considered to be a formal EU policy. For this reason the focus is also on the way European spatial planning influences and becomes part of already established fields of policy. Therefore, the focus is predominantly directed towards institutionalism, of which, as we will see in the following section, policy networks form an application in its broadest sense.

1.4   Analysing processes of institutionalisation

The institutionalisation of European spatial planning is a complex, multifacetted, multi-actor and multi-layered process. To get a grip on this process, a collection of the following theoretical approaches will be used: discourse analysis, theory on the application of strategic plans, theory on Europeanisation and planning doctrine. This section serves to explain how they fit together when viewed from an institutional perspective.

1.4.1   The concept of institution

As indicated, institutions are seen as a stable, valued, recurring pattern of behaviour and institutionalisation as the process by which organisations and procedures acquire value and stability (Goodin, 1996). It is clear that institutions are not the same as organisations and procedures. In fact, institutions can be regarded as the structures that bind organisations and procedures together and give them meaning. Therefore, in an institutional setting behav-

iour is more stable and predictable. While stability is generally appreciated, a high level of stability can also have its disadvantages, especially for agents whose objectives are not well served by the current institutional system. The latter applies to European spatial planning.

Explaining how institutions change is a concern in many academic fields, not only in relation to European integration and the functioning of the EU (Hall & Taylor, 1998; Goodin, 1996). For the purpose of tracing the institutionalisation of European spatial planning, it is less relevant to explore in depth the various understandings of institutionalisation. Also, whereas analytically it may be possible to distinguish between the various views on institutions, in actual research often a blend of two or three is used. This research is no different, although the emphasis is on a sociological understanding of institutions. The key issue in social theory is the relationship between 'structure' on the one hand and 'agency' on the other, and in particular how to blend the two into a model. The latter is the purpose of discourse analysis as developed by Hajer (1995), which is used extensively in this research and will be discussed in more depth below.

Institutions cannot just be understood as a collection of formal rules, regulations and organisations. Also, whereas it is widely recognised that actors, in pursuing their needs and objectives, act rationally (within a subjective institutionally-conditioned context that is), institutions are not just the path-dependent result of implementing the most efficient and cost effective solutions. Aspects such as unbalanced power relations mean that institutions will persist if they serve the actors or coalitions in power, even if they are not efficient (Hodgson, 1993 in Buitelaar *et al*., 2007). Policy solutions conceived on this basis for increasing 'spatial efficiency', as proposed by the European spatial planners, will not be adopted just like that. This refers to what March and Olsen (1989: 23-24) call the 'logic of social appropriateness'. Institutions cannot be interpreted as mere instruments, controlled by some organisation created specifically for that purpose that can be adapted if deemed necessary. Following March and Olson (1989) institutions, such as the EU, in a sociological sense, also represent certain symbolic values, which provide them with cultural significance. In so doing, they not only form a set of instruments and a platform for interaction and power games, but also a cultural frame of reference that provides meaning and helps to orientate and steer behaviour.

1.4.2 Processes of institutional change

Changing institutions is not simply a matter of turning or twisting a knob or two. In general institutional change is seen as the result of: evolution, accident or intention.

Evolution is understood as a gradual process in which institutionally conditioned agents respond and adapt to societal change and in so doing change

institutions. In particular, economists explain institutional evolution in Dar-winistic terms of survival of the fittest. Discourse analysis focusing amongst others on the development of language is an appropriate instrument in unveiling such gradual processes (see Section 1.4.5 below). Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 all show how European planners have developed a policy language in response to the changing political agenda of the EU.

Institutional change 'by accident' refers to unexpected situations of crises and disasters, which radically alter the view of society and lead to swift action and reaction. Well-known examples of such radical institutional change are the Three Mile Island and Chernobyl nuclear power plant accidents, which in the 1970s and 80s radically changed the balance between supporters and opponents of nuclear energy, resulting in many countries in a ban on nucle-ar energy. Chapter 8 presents a case of accident due to the unexpected impact of the EU Air Quality directive on Dutch land use. Chapter 9 goes further into this issue.

Institutional change by intention or design is understood in different ways. According to Buitelaar et al. (2007), institutional design in sociological institu-tionalism (as opposed to other views on institutions) is not seen as opposed to institutional change but as an integral part of it. Much of the confusion concerning design or intention and institutional change, relates to how 'design' is defined and what is expected from it. Indeed, institutional designs aiming for a complete overhaul of existing institutions runs counter to our understanding of how institutions work. Institutions essentially come about by accident or evolve according to a logic of their own. This does not mean, however, that intentional design does not play a role at all. Often institutions are "...the product of intentional activities gone wrong – unintended by-prod-ucts, the products of various intentional actions cutting across one another, misdirected intentions, or just plain mistakes" (Goodin, 1996: 28). Likewise, "...the Myth of the Intentional Designer ... is greatly to be avoided in theories of institutional design. Typically there is no single design or designer. There are just lots of localised attempts at partial design cutting across one another...". (ibid.)

In understanding the institutionalisation of European spatial planning all three types of processes play a role, but since European spatial planners actively try to change the current system through the ESDP, ESPON and so forth, the focus here is in particular on change through intention or design.

1.4.3   A model of institutional change

It is beneficial to keep in mind models explaining the conditions for institu-tional change and the scope of institutional design in influencing such condi-tions and making effective use of them. Buitelaar and his colleagues provide a useful approach (Buitelaar et al., 2007). Basically what the model comes down

to is that institutional change relies on two instances where policy windows open up. The first 'critical moment' (after Burch et al., 2003 in Buitelaar et al. 2007) is where current institutions (in the form of hegemonic discourses, i.e. discourses that dominate other discourses) become challenged by internal or external critical reflecting agents. The second moment, the 'critical juncture', occurs at a later stage and results from agents grasping the opportunity provided by the first critical moment, to position themselves and realise change. This change encompasses the past institutional pattern and induces the overhaul of discursive hegemonies.

The emergence of critical junctures is explained by Kingdon's (1995) theory on agenda setting. Kingdon suggests that three independent streams of respectively (1) societal problem perception, (2) suggested solutions and (3) political development have to come together to open up a policy window or, in current terminology, a critical juncture. The emergence of a critical moment, however, depends on two interrelated developments: first, a stream of 'institutional reflection' challenging the current institutional pattern (hegemonic discourse) in terms of alternative ideas, solutions and the actions of agents; second, external societal developments that put the present institutional arrangement under strain. "The first window of opportunity opens when one of these developments, or a combination of both, exerts sufficient pressure to open up the discursive arena." (Buitelaar et al., 2007: 896). In this model it thus should be considered possible that critical moments emerge as the exclusive result of the European planning community's institutional reflection and push for change.

To actually become influential once such a moment occurs, a critical aspect will be what Buitelaar *et al.* (2007: 895) call the agent's 'transformative capacity'. This capacity is determined by at least two factors: first, the ability "… to gain societal recognition, trust and legitimacy … [and] second, the capacity … to learn and to act upon this learning, that is, the capacity for institutional reflection". (ibid.) The capacity of European spatial planners to learn and to reflect on institutions is not an explicit focus of this research, but transpires from the progression of their ideas on planning as voiced by successive outputs such as ESPON results as well as the Territorial Agenda. The more these outputs reflect changes in society the more this forms an indicator of the capacity to learn. Whether the agent will gain recognition, however, is an explicit area of research and depends on internal as well as external enforcement (Hodgson 2006). Internal enforcement, or self-organisation, is covered in this research by the focus on the development of a planning community with coherent ideas about European spatial planning policy. External enforcement is analysed by discourse analysis as well as by tracing the application of the messages conveyed by the European planning community. Transformative capacity and self-organisation will be invoked as concepts in Chapter 9.

1.4.4 Self-organisation: concepts, principles and community

Self-organisation is about both building arrangements between the network of actors involved in European spatial planning and giving it substance. It is about creating language, coherence and shared rules and values. A set of tools to track down such a development is provided by the theoretical framework of analysing planning doctrine in the Netherlands as developed by Faludi and Van der Valk (1994). Key concepts of planning doctrine are: (1) planning principles, (2) spatial planning concepts and (3) a planning community. A fourth central concept of planning doctrine concerns the 'planning subject'. Planning subjects refer to legal authorities with specific rights in the field of spatial planning. Since there is no formal European spatial planning policy, the concept is considered less relevant. Also, in a multi-level governance environment like the EU it is difficult to conceive of one planning subject. A compound or fragmented planning subject would be more likely. In fact, some of the roles, like writing policy documents, that planning subjects have in statutory national planning systems, are at the level of the EU, in absence of such a system, taken up by the planning community.

Planning principles and spatial concepts describe the procedural and substantive ideas underlying a planning policy. Planning principles deal with norms and rules about the way planning should work. Examples of such principles are obligatory consultation or stakeholders' involvement. The central, yet vague planning principle of the ESDP is the 'spatial approach', which in fact comprises a number of planning principles. Spatial concepts express, in a condensed and synthesised form, through words and images, ideas about the current and desired spatial organisation of an area (Zonneveld, 2007). The 'pentagon', referring to the EU's economic core area demarcated by the five cities of London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Hamburg, which accounts for 50% of the EU's GDP, 40% of the EU's population on just 20% of the territory, is the ESDP's central spatial conceptualisation of the EU territory, although not as a desired pattern but as a pattern that should change. Likewise, polycentric development and the creation of 'global economic integration zones' to counterbalance the dominant pentagon is its central spatial concept indicating the desired direction of change.

A planning community refers to professionals such as planners, architects, politicians, journalists, academics, consultants and for example project developers who work as individuals or are embedded in public, private or non-governmental organisations and share the conviction that spatial planning as a professional discipline and policy matters. Whereas the concept of a planning community seems to imply unity, this is not necessarily the case, as shown, for example, in Chapters 3 and 5. Obviously, the more coherent its messages the more the outside world will recognise the European planning community as an agent.

1.4.5 External enforcement: discourse analysis

Whether indeed the European planning community is increasingly recognised as an agent, or in other words enforces its external profile and becomes further institutionalised, can be analysed in several ways.

A traditional set of institutional elements is: resources, rules and ideas. Resources refer to budgets and personnel resources, rules to norms, values and regulations and ideas to policy directions and concepts. For example, Healey (2006) sees transformations in governance (and ultimately culture and institutions) as the result of, amongst others, "territorially focused collective action…" by a multitude of actors, "…each with their own relation to allocative power, regulatory power and their own discursive frames" (Healey, 2006: 305). The more control an actor or coalition of actors acquires over ideas, rules and resources, the more this expresses its institutional position or embeddedness.

However, although helpful, the three elements only make change visible, but do not explain the processes behind it. A useful framework to analyse institutional change is discourse analysis as developed by Hajer (1995). Discourse is understood as "an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorisations that are produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities which permeates regional, national and supranational policy making circuits" (Hajer, 1995: 44). Focusing on the production of discourse enables the analysis of the processes of institutional change. The key is to look at the processes that take place between the levels of agents and structure.

For this Hajer developed the concepts of 'discourse coalitions' and storylines. Storylines refer to "…(crisp) generative statements that bring together previously unrelated elements of discourse and thus allow for new understandings and create new meanings…" (Hajer, 2000: 140). Discourse coalitions are formed around such storylines. Combining the concepts enables the researcher to step up one level above that of the individual agent. Once storylines and the coalitions supporting them become influential and acquire the status of a 'hegemonic discourse', this leads to institutional change and indeed new institutions.

Planning concepts and planning principles, as introduced above, neatly fit with the idea of storylines. Both have the character of broad ideas with regard to future development. Planning principles and concepts, however, explicitly voice planning concerns, whereas storylines can involve any possible policy. The idea of storylines and discourse also coincides with other views on how planning works, such as voiced by authors who, amongst others, emphasise the communicative aspects of planning (Fischer & Forester, 1993; Healey 1999; Brink & Metze, 2006), or for example, see planning as 'persuasive storytelling about the future' (Throgmorton, 1992, 2003).

That having been said, the concepts of discourse coalition and a planning community do not seamlessly fit together. In certain circumstances, in which planners have found strong political consensus, a planning community may completely overlap with discourse coalition. In this particular case, the members of the European planning community have different views that are based on more deeply rooted considerations, or storylines, about the development of society (see in particular Chapter 5). As such, planners of the same planning community may belong to different discourse coalitions adhering to different models of society, which often cut through society and concern more than planning alone.

1.4.6 Evaluating European spatial planning

As indicated, next to discourse analysis, this research also invokes a theory of application to evaluate the influence of the European planning community. This concerns the theoretical framework that is developed by Mastop and Faludi (Mastop & Faludi, 1997; see also Faludi, 2000) to evaluate strategic planning documents.

As will be further elaborated in Chapter 7, the main elements of evaluation theory concern the distinction between conformance and performance on the one hand and between implementation and application on the other. Faludi (2003) considers it more appropriate to describe follow-up activities to strategic planning documents like the ESDP as application rather than implementation since, unlike masterplans or blueprints, strategic planning documents frequently necessitate further elaboration and sometimes even require other major changes to take place (e.g. institutional changes). The key issue is whether plans or programmes have 'generative capacity' (Faludi, 2001; Shaw & Sykes, 2003), forming an indicator of an agents' 'transformative capacity'. Elsewhere, Faludi (2001) contends that application is not about changes in spatial development but rather about shaping the minds of the actors. Whenever the ESDP or, for example, ESPON results help actors to make sense of a particular situation or problem we can speak of application. Application thus leads to institutional development.

What is not clear, however, is the direction of this institutional change. This is because application is about performance rather than conformance. If an actor uses the ESDP or ESPON in its decision-making we can speak of performance. Conformance, relating to the correspondence between the outcomes and intentions of strategic plans, then becomes a matter of secondary importance, because by doing so, actors will often reinterpret concepts, principles and strategies from their own perspective, and perhaps also ignore or reject other parts of the same document that are less relevant for their task. Such cases form an example of what has been described above as the unwanted or unexpected effects of institutional design. Yet, tracing these

effects helps us to understand whether and how European spatial planning leads to institutional change and how planning can be made more effective. Chapters 4, 7 and 9 present alternatives to the current approaches that European spatial planners use. Whilst institutional reflection can be seen as a source of pressure to create a critical moment, the next sub-section introduces an external societal development that may put the present institutional arrangement under strain: the Europeanisation of planning.

1.4.7 Europeanisation and institutionalisation

Europeanisation, as a final perspective in this research, refers to processes of institutionalisation that are specifically related to the EU and European integration. It relates basically to the impact of the EU on member states and regions and how domestic practices adapt to this. The EU in this case refers to policies, regulations, subsidies, formal and informal rules, but also more abstract notions such as the creation of the single market or the project of European integration, or, for stakeholders, just the reflection on being part of the EU as a large institutional context. The processes of Europeanisation take place in exactly the same ways as processes of institutionalisation in general. As Chapter 8 explores in more depth they can have a top-down, bottom-up or a cyclical character and can evolve without stakeholders even noticing.

Whereas application is considered part of it, Europeanisation provides a wider perspective than that as it takes domestic practices as its point of departure and seeks to determine how the EU in all its aspects, including European spatial planning, impacts on these practices. Böhme and Waterhout (2008) show that the Europeanisation of domestic planning is induced by many other sources too, not least by EU sector policies requiring domestic spatial planning to alter its focus or processes. Transnational cooperation through the INTERREG programme and an increasingly felt need for the regions and member states to spatially position themselves internationally (Williams, 1996; Zonneveld, 2005; Zonneveld & Waterhout, 2007) form important driving forces for the further Europeanisation of planning.

With the increasing manifestation of Europeanisation a dialectic picture emerges in which two partly related processes work in different ways at the same time. On the one hand the planning community aims to spatialise EU policy processes, whereas on the other hand domestic planning increasingly becomes prone to Europeanisation. Interestingly in this two-way process Europeanisation is partly induced by the European planning community that, being predominantly composed of national representatives, itself experiences the effects of this ongoing process. From an institutional perspective it is interesting to see how these parallel processes mutually influence as well as possibly reinforce each other, which is what chapter 8 shows.

An interesting, yet complicating aspect of the processes of Europeanisation

is that the effects differ between member states (Héritier *et al.*, 2001; Gianna-kourou, 2005; Waterhout et al., 2007). The latter forms a problem in the sense that no single model can explain the processes of Europeanisation taking place in various member states (Radealli, 2004). Chapter 7, looking at the application of the ESDP through INTERREG, shows that different local circumstances (institutional as well as territorial) result in different interpretations of ESDP messages. Chapter 8 sheds some light on the variety of processes of Europeanisation by focusing on national planning in the Netherlands. It also shows some interrelations between Europeanisation and European spatial planning. To get a complete view of the relation between Europeanisation and European spatial planning similar exercises should be carried out for each EU member state, something that unfortunately is beyond the scope of this research. This brings us to the final part of this chapter, a brief outline of the book.

1.5 Plan of the book

The next chapter 'European organisations and a territorial dimension in EU policy-making' will discuss in more depth the various organisations and institutions of the European Union and their relevance for European spatial planning. In so doing, the chapter forms an extended introduction to this book.

Chapter 3 'Polycentric development: what is behind it' then zooms in on the planning community and how it overcame the deadlock concerning the focus of European spatial planning by invoking the concept of polycentric development, which bridges various interests. As such it provides an example of the development of discourse as well as of the community's self-organising capacity.

Chapter 4, 5 and 6 are all inspired by the concept of territorial cohesion, which established a critical moment for the European spatial planning discourse to become more influential. Chapter 4 'Visions on territorial cohesion' reflects on the possible meaning of territorial cohesion, which was all but clear, and on the institutional environment in which the community wants to become active. It makes some proposals to render the concept of territorial cohesion more concrete. Chapter 5 'Territorial cohesion: the underlying discourses' elaborates further on the background of territorial cohesion and analyses how the planning community is divided into several discourse coalitions arising from different European models of society. Chapter 6 'The emerging territorial cohesion agenda: the ball in the court of the member states' highlights a certain stage in the process leading to the adoption of the Territorial Agenda.

Chapters 7 and 8 view the development of a European spatial planning discourse from a more distant perspective. Chapter 7 'Mixed messages: how the ESDP concepts have been applied in INTERREG IIIB programmes, priorities and

projects' focuses on how the ESDP has performed as a frame of reference in INTERREG cooperation. It implicitly informs us of the transformative capacity of European spatial planning. Chapter 8 'Episodes of Europeanisation of Dutch national spatial planning' traces the influences of EU policies and European integration on national planning in the Netherlands. It does so by analysing the application of the ESDP as well as highlighting the influence of EU policies, in particular the Air Quality Directive, on Dutch planning. Interestingly, in particular the latter has created critical moments for institutional change. In so doing, the chapter also shows the interdependence between domestic and European institutions. To bring European spatial planning forward, planners have to play chess simultaneously at at least two institutional levels.

Chapter 9, which was written in parallel to chapter 1, finally draws all the information together, bringing some papers from outside this book, and sheds some light on the current state of affairs as regards the institutionalisation of European spatial planning.

As this book consists of a collection of papers written at different moments and for different purposes, the reader is not expected to read it from start to finish, but rather, start by reading individual chapters. For this reason every chapter is introduced with a short history of the chapter and its role in terms of the institutional perspective developed here.

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2 European organisations and the institutionalisation of a territorial dimension in EU policy

Introduction to Chapter 2

Chapter 2 will be published as:
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This chapter results from a project concerning the editing of a reader on European territorial governance together with Wil Zonneveld, Leonie Janssen-Jansen and Jochem de Vries. The work started in 2005 in parallel to a joint project that I did together with Leonie on a reader in Dutch on 'borderless space', which was published in 2006. Jochem is also a former PhD student of Andreas' and Wil's. Rather coincidentally, I probably thank my position at the research centre OTB to Jochem, who had just left in October 2002 to go to a small consultancy firm when I was looking for a new job. I still have 'his' telephone number and, although we have moved twice since, even the same office chair…
For this project I had written a chapter on European institutions and their role in territorial development issues. A first version was submitted in October 2006 and a final version in September 2007. It continues on from the introduction chapter by focusing explicitly on European organisations and how they matter for territorial issues. As such the chapter provides a further introduction to the theme of the book.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the extent to which a territorial dimension is institutionalised in EU policies. The most important policies and European organisations that play a role in territorial development issues are reviewed and the various views are compared with each other. We then assess whether the combination of these views has led to a stable, broadly accepted pattern of ideas and values regarding the role of spatial planning in the EU, or, in other words, whether planning has become institutionalised. All this is put into the context of a discussion about the necessity of a spatial planning competence. It becomes clear that this question was topical in the 1990s whereas since the millennium attention has broadened towards other, more informal, ways of institutionalising territorial development issues in EU policies. During this same period the terms 'spatial planning' or 'spatial development', although not meaning exactly the same, have been traded in for 'territorial development' and 'territorial cohesion'. Since there are hardly any differences as regards operationalisation, though arguably in connotation, throughout the following text the terms spatial and territorial will be used as synonyms.

The territorial dimension of EU policies has received increasing attention since the publication by the European Commission of the Europe 2000 in 1991 and in 1994 of the Europe 2000+ reports, and in particular since the publication in 1999 of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) (CEC 1991, 1994, 1999). Stimulated by this interest the Commission established the INTERREG IIC programme, which came into operation in 1997. It co-finances transnational co-operation on territorial issues and was succeeded in 2000 by INTERREG IIIB. In addition, after the pilot Study Programme European Spatial Planning (SPESP) programme, the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON) came into operation in 2002, fostering a research programme to monitor the development of the EU territory.

Furthermore, the envisaged Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, attempted to formalise in article 3 (and 4 and 158) territorial cohesion as one of the Union's key objectives, next to economic and social cohesion. Whilst the Constitution was rejected in 2005 by the French and Dutch referenda, the so-called Reform, or Lisbon, Treaty[1] on which the European Council of heads of state and government reached consensus in June 2007 under the German Presidency, still puts forward the objective of territorial cohesion. The definitive text of this treaty, however, still needs to be agreed upon before it can enter the ratification process. Moreover, in May 2007 the EU ministers accepted the Territorial Agenda for the EU (Territorial Agenda, 2007), which has as a

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1 The Reform Treaty's official name is: Treaty amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community. Currently it is referred to as Lisbon Treaty.

background document the Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union (Territorial State, 2007). All this may lead to a more prominent position of territorial development issues on the EU's political agenda. It also demands a better understanding of the key players and their positions regarding the territorial dimension in EU politics.

This chapter will first outline the basics of the European Union. Secondly, in order to add some historical perspective, it will briefly reiterate a discussion held in the 1990s on the relevance of Treaty articles for spatial planning. It then, thirdly, focuses on several EU organisations and their perspectives as regards territorial development issues, which, fourthly, are compared with each other in terms of substance and issues of legitimacy. Fifthly, the chapter discusses how these bodies co-operate to further institutionalise a territorial dimension and whether they form a 'planning community' or coalition. The chapter ends with some concluding remarks emphasising the importance of informal structures.

2.2 The EU: a construct built on treaties

Formally speaking the European Union consists of three pillars: the European Community, co-operation on justice and home affairs, and co-operation on the implementation of a common foreign and security policy including the eventual framing of a common defence policy. For our purposes the first pillar, the European Community, is relevant because it has supranational power. This means that member states have handed over certain competences to the European Community (which in itself of course is composed of the same member states), which in return issues binding policies, laws and regulations to member states by means of the so-called 'community method' (see below). The opposite of supranational is intergovernmental, which is how the two other pillars are organised. Here, as opposed to the community method, issues are discussed intergovernmentally and remain the full responsibility of the member states. In our daily language (and in this chapter) the European Union and European Community are often used as synonyms for the reason that in comparison to the other two (intergovernmental) pillars the Community has far more influence.

The EU is founded on and composed of a number of Treaties. Formally speaking the EU can only act within the limits of these treaties that, often after intensive debate, have been agreed upon voluntarily by all member states at so-called Intergovernmental Conferences (IGC). Table 2.1 presents a chronological overview of the development of the EU in terms of new Treaties and enlargements. The most recent is the Lisbon Treaty, which, in contrast to the rejected Constitution, does not aim to replace all other existing Treaties.

All treaties together with other EU legislation, such as regulations, direc-

Table 2.1 Chronological overview of EC/EU development

Date + location	Treaty + main effect	Involved countries/Enlargement
1951, April 18, Paris	Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)	Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands
1957, March 25, Rome	Treaties of Rome: - Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) - Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom)	All
1967, July 1, Brussels	Merger Treaty: provided single Commission and Council for the three Communities	All
1973		Denmark, Ireland and United Kingdom
1981		Greece
1986		Portugal and Spain
1986, February 17, Luxembourg and February 28, The Hague	Single European Act (entered into force 1987, July 1 Paved the way for a single European Market	All
1992, Februari 7, Maastricht	Treaty establishing the European Union (entered into force 1993, November 1 - Changed EEC in European Communities (EC), which includes ECSC and Euratom, and; - introduced: Common Justice & Home Affairs pillar, and - Common Foreign and Security policy pillar	All
1995		Austria, Finland and Sweden
1997, October 2, Amsterdam	Amsterdam Treaty (entered into force 1999, May 1 - Modernising EU decision-making arrangements; - Simplified and consolidated existing treaties; - Renumbered the articles of EC and EU treaties	All
2001, February 26, Nice	Treaty of Nice (entered into force 2003, February 1 - Preparing EU institutions for enlargement	All
2004, May 1		Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia
2004, October 29, Rome	'European Constitution' – Treaty establishing a constitution for Europe (rejected after negative referenda in France and the Netherlands in 2005)	
2007, January 1		Bulgaria, Romania
2007, October 18-19	Lisbon Treaty (or 'Reform Treaty') – Treaty amending the Treaty on the European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community (ratification scheduled before June 2009)	

tives, decisions and jurisprudence, are called the *acquis communautaire*. The EU can only make policies in fields or areas that are included in this *acquis*, and for which it thus has a competence. Spatial planning is not part of one of the treaties although there is an escape route to this acquis, granted by Article

308 of the EC Treaty. This article provides the Council with the opportunity to develop, with unanimous support, policies that are no part of the *acquis*. However, this possibility has never been seriously considered for a European spatial planning policy. In contrast, during the 1990s when a treaty competence was deemed the most opportune way to increase influence, the attention of planners was primarily directed to Treaty articles that could possibly provide a handhold for some form of European spatial planning. The next section will briefly elaborate on this discussion.

2.3 The search for relevant Treaty Articles

Planners raise two arguments for being given some influence at the EU level. First, they argue that existing EU policies cause unintended (and unwanted) spatial impact and often require spatial planners at national, regional or local levels to adapt their policies and practices. A spatial approach, it is argued, could lead to better policy coherence and thus less negative impacts. Secondly, planners feel that many territorial relations transcend national borders and require some form of coordination at a transnational or even European scale. Examples are river catchment areas, urban networks, infrastructure and nature reserves. Apparently, however, these arguments have not been strong enough for planning to be included in the Treaty.

  Possibly a third, more abstract, reason for including planning in the Treaty follows from the observation that the Treaty of Rome, aiming as it does to create a European 'level playing field', started both an economic project and a large geographical project of homogeneity and accelerated flows of capital (Swyngedouw, 1994). However, the geographical aspect of European integration has always been overshadowed by the development of a Single European Market, which has become the number one priority. Consequently, the treaties primarily include articles referring to policies that shape the necessary conditions for creating such a Single European Market, and spatial planning has never been considered one of them. A further complicating factor to granting the EU a spatial planning competency is that member states tend to associate it with land use planning, which would mean a loss of control over their own territory. This is obviously a very sensitive issue. To be clear though, the advocates of a planning competency have never intended to regulate land use.

  Because a Treaty article exclusively devoted to spatial planning was considered a distant prospect, during the 1990s several studies were carried out to assess whether existing articles could form a legitimate basis for carrying out spatial planning related activities at a European level (Stumm & Noetzel, 1998; Zonneveld & Faludi, 1998; Gatawis, 2000). Table 2.2 shows the relevant articles, which can be found in different parts and chapters of the treaties.

Table 2.2 Relevant EU Treaty articles for territorial development issues

Article	Chapter or policy field	Topic	Relevance and/or difficulty
2 and 3 EC Treaty	Principles	Listing of general objectives of EU	Proposed as appropriate articles to include spatial planning
16 EC Treaty	Principles	Providing services of general economic interest (SGEI) in order to sustain territorial cohesion	SGEI form a (too) narrow agenda for territorial cohesion and/or spatial planning policy
158 (ex 130a) 159 (ex 130b) EC Treaty	Economic and social cohesion	Promoting overall harmonious development through actions pursuing economic and social cohesion	Strongly related to structural funds and regional development
175 (ex 130s) EC Treaty	Environment	Lists measures affecting town and country planning and land use as means to reach environmental objectives	Measures have never been applied because they are subject to unanimous decision-making
10 ERDF Regulation	European Regional Development Fund	Prescribes that 2% of ERDF funds should be reserved for innovative actions in the field of planning	Legal basis for Europe 2000 and 2000+ documents and to some extent also for ESDP
Lisbon Treaty	Definitions and objectives of the Union	Includes territorial cohesion as main objective of EU policies	Territorial cohesion provides legal basis to deal with spatial issues

In sum, none of the Treaty articles has ever provided an unambiguous planning competency. Arguably the most valuable has been article 10 of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) regulation 1994-1999, which offered the possibility of using up to a ceiling of one percent of the ERDF budget for innovative activities such as co-operation in the field of spatial planning. The Commission has invoked this article to legitimise and pay for the development of Europe 2000 and 2000+ reports and its involvement in the intergovernmental ESDP process (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002).

It should be noted that the absence of appropriate treaty articles has not stopped planners as they have always found informal and unofficial ways to proceed with their activities. In fact, it has been argued that the ESDP itself has been developed in an 'institutional vacuum' (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002). Yet, their work might become easier if a competence was in place, as this would legitimise larger investments by the member states in terms of time and personnel.

As indicated, territorial cohesion was included in article 3 of the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaty. Albeit a rather undefined concept, territorial cohesion was welcomed by planners as a possibility to add a territorial dimension to EU policies and, in particular, to increase policy coherence. What will happen to territorial cohesion once it has become a formal EU policy objective depends on many different factors including the EU policy-making process and the preferences and influence of the key players. Finding out what the key players and their preferences are is what the remainder of this chapter is about.

2.4 The EU decision-making process

In daily European policy making the European Commission, representing the European interest, and the Council of Ministers, representing the member states, are the key players. All policy development processes start with the Commission which, according to the Community Method, has the single 'right of initiative' and may, as the only EU actor, propose new policies, and end with the Council deciding over the proposal. Note, however, that all decisions are pre-cooked by officials of the member states and the Commission as well as sometimes independent experts gathering in so-called comitology committees (more about these below). If the consultation procedure applies, then the European Parliament, representing the citizens, gives its opinion whereas if a co-decision procedure applies, the European Parliament decides together with the Council. As more and more policy fields have become subjected to co-decision, the Parliament's influence has substantially increased over the years. The Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions representing employers and workers and the regions respectively have advisory roles in legislation development processes, but also have an agenda-setting capacity, advising the Commission to consider issues it deems important. Last but not least the European Council of the heads of state and governments deals with the 'big' issues such as Treaty-reforms and the seven yearly EU financial framework at Intergovernmental Conferences (for further reading see Nugent, 2003).

As indicated, most decisions at the EU level are prepared in committees. Because of its relatively small size, the Commission, which has no more employees than for example the city of Cologne, often relies on expert groups composed of experts and/or member state officials to draft proposals, but always with the Commission chairing and calling the tune. Likewise, during the policy implementation stage use is made of so-called comitology committees, of which there are some 200 permanent ones. They are also composed of member state officials and chaired by the Commission (Nugent, 2003). In this context mention should be made of the Spatial and Urban Development working group (SUD) which is a subcommittee of the Committee on the Development and Conversion of the Regions (CDCR), a comitology committee managing the structural funds (more about the SUD below).

The Council of Ministers also uses working groups composed of national officials to assess new policy proposals. The outcomes are transferred to COREPER, the Committee of Permanent Representatives. If COREPER cannot agree, the decision is left to the Council of Ministers. The European Parliament too discusses proposals in sectoral committees, but unlike the expert groups, comitology or working groups, these are composed of members of parliament (Corbett *et al.*, 2005). Working in committees results in closed decision-making processes in which there is barely any consideration for cross cutting issues,

such as a territorial dimension. As will become clear below, most key players consider the territorial dimension important.

2.5 Players and their attitudes towards territorial issues

2.5.1 The European Commission

Because it has the so-called 'right of initiative' the Commission holds a key position when it comes to developing EU policies. From a territorial perspective it is therefore a bit disappointing to learn that its attitude towards spatial planning can be described as lukewarm at best. However, it is important to emphasise that the Commission does not exist, but that it is composed of many different organisations. In the context of this chapter the relevant parts are the college of European Commissioners, including a President, adding up to 25 persons in total, an administration divided over currently 17 Directorate Generals (DG's), which can be best compared to the member states' government departments and a small Secretariat General, which, amongst other things, is responsible for the coordination of Commission activities and relations with the Council and EP. It beyond the scope of this paper to explain how the different parts making up 'the Commission' work and co-operate together, but what is important is that there is relatively little co-ordination between them (see Nugent, 2003). From a spatial perspective this is considered to lead to a lack of policy coherence (Robert *et al.*, 2001).

Looking at the response of various DGs to the ESDP it might be concluded that besides DG Regio and DG Environment the interest within the Commission services in the spatial planning approach as put forward by the ESDP is minimal (Nordregio, 2007). Nevertheless, it has rung a bell within DG Regio, which, as one of its co-authors, invested greatly in the ESDP. Accordingly, the Third Cohesion report (CEC, 2004a), for which DG Regio is the penholder, has been very much inspired by the ESDP and its 'spatial approach' and ideas on polycentric development. However, according to its officials even within DG Regio there is a distinction between territorial thinkers and non-territorial thinkers with the latter, who regard the ESDP as wishful thinking rather than a feasible strategy, in the majority. This may partly explain why, compared to its predecessor, little conceptual progress has been made in the Fourth Cohesion Report (CEC, 2007). Still it may be promising that, despite the lack of attention for the ESDP, within various DGs signs can be found of increasing attention towards spatial issues (Nordregio, 2007). However, despite this development it is probably safe to stay with Nugent's (2003) conclusion that currently at a more general level the Commission is not the place from which to expect broad visions to emerge.

2.5.2 The Council of Ministers and the Informal Ministerial Meetings on Spatial Planning and Development

Whereas the Commission represents the proverbial 'European interest', the Council of Ministers is the place where Member States' interests are weighed against each other. Depending on the policy under consideration the Council of Ministers consists of ministers of transport, environment, agriculture or for example finance. The Council is chaired by the Member State holding the six-monthly rotating EU Presidency. Because of this and because ministers can be replaced due to national elections, the Council is a less stable constellation than the Commission, making it hard to say anything definitive about its attitudes towards planning.

As we know from the ESDP process there is also an informal meeting of ministers responsible for spatial planning and development (note however that the actual title changes from meeting to meeting). Within these informal ministerial meetings some interest for territorial issues can be identified, albeit one that is clearly precooked by the member state officials that prepare the meetings. During the ESDP process the Committee on Spatial Development (CSD) did this, but in 2000 this was taken over by the SUD working group (which as from the 1st of January 2007 is called the Working Group on Territorial Cohesion and Urban Matters – TCUM). Currently ministers' meetings are prepared by so-called DG meetings (Faludi & Waterhout, 2005). Interestingly, while the names and settings of the respective bodies have changed over time, the officials have remained the same. For other, formal, Councils it is harder to identify an interest in territorial issues.

Instead of trying to assess the attitude towards spatial planning of various Council configurations, it makes more sense to focus on the position of planning in the member states, since, after all, this is where the ministers' mandates come from. Between the member states the political position of spatial planning and the systems themselves vary greatly. For example, the EU Compendium (CEC, 1997) distinguishes between four different ideal types of planning approaches, each of which influences the respective national planning systems to a greater or lesser extent.[2] A more recent publication (Janin Rivolin & Faludi 2005) distinguishes between Nordic, British-Irish, northwest European and Mediterranean perspectives on planning, which have more to do with attitudes. To this the perspectives of the Central and Eastern member states should be added. There is no clear mutual relationship between the various approaches to and perspectives on planning. This just serves to indicate the

2 These are: the comprehensive integrated approach, the regional economic approach, the land use approach and the urbanism approach.

wide diversity of spatial planning systems and policies in Europe.

Countries where spatial planning traditionally holds a relative strong political position are the Netherlands, Denmark, France and Slovenia. In the federalised countries Austria, Belgium and Germany and regionalised countries such as Italy and Spain planning has a relatively weak position at the national level, although planning can be strong at the regional level (e.g. Germany). Ireland and the UK represent countries where planning currently is making a revival, whereas in the Baltic states as well as in Poland and Portugal spatial planning frameworks are being developed. Despite these initiatives and traditions, in most member states planning and 'soft' territorial concerns usually tend to lose out to 'hard' sectoral interests, which is also why in general at Council level there is virtually no interest in planning. Over the years, within the informal ministerial meetings on spatial planning and development, major steps have been made under German, Luxembourgian and Dutch presidencies who invest most in terms of personnel and are the most active (Faludi & Waterhout, 2005). Delegations and ministers of other member states often put their presidencies at the service of ongoing processes. On an individual level others show genuine interest and would be happy to play an active role within the informal council, but lack political support at home. The Territorial Agenda (2007) makes reference to the future Portuguese, Slovene and Hungarian presidencies, which indicates that they aspire to play an active role in the process too.

2.5.3 The European Parliament

The European Parliament has always been a strong advocate of a spatial approach to European policy making. In 1983 it adopted the so-called resolution Gendebien that argued for a European spatial planning competency. Because of the informal status of the ESDP process and the current process leading to the Territorial Agenda 2007 the European Parliament has up till now never been directly involved, but always showed its support. In a number of resolutions it pleads for more policy coherence and a territorial dimension in EU policies. The Commission is obliged to react on these resolutions which makes them very important for agenda setting.

Reports and subsequent resolutions are prepared by so-called rapporteurs and approved by the appropriate committee before being tabled at the plenary EP meeting for adoption. The Committee on Regional Development (REGI), formerly known as the Committee on Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism, is relevant for territorial development issues. Having analysed the EP's resolutions throughout the 1990's Stumm and Noetzel (1998) conclude that the European Parliament has been consistently constructive and innovative regarding a territorial approach.

Looking at the EP's recent resolutions it can be concluded that this line has continued (EP, 2002; 2003; 2004; 2005; Husar, 2006). Very common are the pleas,

with reference to the ESDP, for better spatial coherence between policies and more attention in general for the territorial dimension of policies. In anticipation of article 3 of the Constitution (then still under ratification) the resolution prepared by Ambroise Guellec considers territorial cohesion a fundamental objective of regional planning and calls "…for the territorial dimension to be considered a major element in the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies" (EP, 2005: 5). It furthermore calls for the Commission to draw up a White Paper on territorial cohesion before 2007. The Commission had this in mind, but stalled the idea after the French and Dutch referenda.[3]

2.5.4 The Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee

Two final official players in the field of EU legislation are the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), both of which have an advisory role. They can also request the Commission to pay attention to certain policy issues and are therefore also important with regard to agenda setting. Both the CoR and EESC have shown a consistently positive attitude towards the further 'spatialisation' of EU policies.

The EESC was particularly active during the 1990s. For example, an opinion by rapporteur E. Muller (EESC, 1995) on the Europe 2000+ document emphasised the importance of "…spatial planning […] as a key factor in improving quality of life…". Furthermore, the EESC argued, "…a concrete link must be established between spatial planning and environmental policy, and between spatial planning and regional policy". Since the publication of ESDP in 1999 the EESC has paid less attention to the spatialisation of EU policies. Nevertheless, the EESC (2004) advocates an increase of the budget for the new Territorial Co-operation Objective in the Third Cohesion Report and supports the idea of territorial impact assessments for regional policy. Although still in favour, the EESC has become less eager in terms of territorial issues.

The CoR has more consistently advocated a spatial approach. It followed the ESDP process, the Commission reports Europe 2000 and Europe 2000+ and has become even more active since 2001 when territorial cohesion became a topic of discussion on which it has passed several resolutions. It also commissioned a study of territorial cohesion to explore its possible meanings and implications (Study group on European politics, 2003). The concept has become fully institutionalised within the CoR with the set-up of the internal committee COTER: Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy. A speech by the CoR's president at a stakeholders' event on territorial cohesion in June 2006 in Amsterdam voiced the CoR's most recent opinions on territorial cohesion (Delebarre, 2006).

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3 The Commission plans to publish a green book on territorial cohesion by September 2008.

2.6 The substance and legitimacy of a spatial approach

2.6.1 What is European spatial planning about?

From the above it is clear that there is potentially wide support for a more spatial approach towards EU policies, although it is less clear what such an approach would entail. It has been argued elsewhere that there are four storylines underpinning the discussions on territorial cohesion: (1) Europe in balance, (2) coherent European policy, (3) competitive Europe and (4) green and clean Europe (Waterhout, 2007; see Chapter 5 of this book). Whereas the second and fourth storylines concerning respectively governance and the environmental issues are considered important and receive broad if rather passive support, for example in the Territorial Agenda (2007), the real debate is about the first and third storyline and concerns issues of cohesion and competitiveness.

'Europe in balance' refers to the cohesion objective and is the storyline receiving most support from many member states (in particular those receiving large aid from the structural funds) as well as from bodies such as the Commission, the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions. These bodies, which are traditionally dominated by French officials and ideas, are inspired by l'*aménagement du territoire*, the French equivalent of spatial planning that, like EU cohesion policy, traditionally is concerned with cohesion objectives and distributing budgets in order to reduce regional disparities (CEC, 1997). This view on cohesion has been given a boost by the perceived threats that globalisation processes and European liberalisation policies pose on regional and territorial development in the sense that only the strong regions seem to benefit. Threats that, according to the coalition supporting this storyline, should be counteracted by amongst others securing a minimum level of services of general (economic) interest (like for example schools, postal services, energy etc.) in all European regions. It was this spirit of thinking that inspired the successful lobby for entering 'territorial cohesion' in the Constitution (Robert, 2007).

As opposed to this, the countries supporting the 'Competitive Europe' storyline see globalisation processes as a challenge to live up to by strengthening Europe's position in the world through investing in Europe's already strong regions, optimising Europe's territorial structures and making better use of each European region's unique territorial capital. Proponents of this view can be found in the relatively rich countries with comparatively liberal economic policies and open economies. In particular the Netherlands supports this view. The Germans, having to combat large disparities within their own country, are less pronounced on this issue and take a middle position between cohesion and competitiveness objectives and argue for balanced and sustainable development.

However, European policy making is not about choosing between black and white and as a consequence policies often form a blend of two or more views. This is in particular the case for informal policies on territorial issues which are not subjected to Qualified Majority Voting and thus rely on consensus between all member states. For this reason and despite the fact that Dutch and German officials wrote all the draft versions, the Territorial Agenda uses soft wordings and concepts that are often written in multi interpretable ways, making them acceptable for all 27 member states. The downside is that the document lacks teeth. On a positive note, however, the mere existence of the document means that the discussions on the further spatialisation of EU policies will go on, which makes it an important vehicle in terms of institutionalisation.

Note also that, as Faludi (2004a) shows, the views of member states are converging. Inspired by, amongst others, the ESDP, *l'aménagement du territoire* has been moving into new directions in which there is more attention on regional competitiveness through spatial development, the use of spatial visions, sustainability issues and coherent policies. Also, spatial policy is now seen as complementary to regional policy rather than similar. In so doing the French approach comes very close to the comprehensive integrated planning approach that is common practice in, for example, Germany and the Netherlands, but which is in turn increasingly inspired by French ideas too, in the sense that planning in these countries increasingly focuses on development.

2.6.2 The legitimacy of European spatial planning

Another issue concerns the potential impact of future EU spatial policy and whom it will affect, or in other words, the issue of legitimacy. Both the individual member states and the Commission used to disagree about this issue, which is also known as the competence issue (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002). In the 1990s, during the ESDP process, the basic question boiled down to the issue of whether the EU should or should not have a full spatial planning competence and if so what would this mean. As is often the case with complex issues, there were as many opinions about this question as there were stakeholders. Placed on an imaginary continuous scale the opposite ends would be occupied by the Commission at one end and Germany at the other, with the other member states and bodies positioning themselves somewhere in between.

The Commission interpreted spatial planning as developing spatial visions to complement the existing mechanisms for putting regional policy into practice. Rhetorically, the Commission asked who could possibly be against a strategic spatial framework underpinning ongoing Community policies. The Germans on the other hand, and in their wake other member states too, interpreted spatial planning not only as strategic planning, but also and importantly as land use planning. The latter definition has crucial implications, as a European spatial planning policy with direct impact on land use would mean

that the member states would lose exclusive sovereignty over their own territory. In the case of Germany, which is a federal state, the sovereignty, or competence, lies with the *Länder*, the states, and not with the federal government, which in this topic is instructed by the *Länder*. An EU planning competence interpreted in the German way would lead to the odd situation in which the EU as well as the *Länder* would have a planning competence, but not the federal government, which is the administrative level in between them. Nevertheless, the Germans have argued for a planning competence, but one that would bind only the European Commission to issue spatially coherent policies and not the member states. Whereas the situation in other member states is less complex, the possibility of losing sovereignty to the EU made a lasting impression and was not wanted by any member state.

In the meantime the competence issue has moved into the background. There are a number of reasons for this. With territorial cohesion mentioned as one of the key EU objectives in Article 3 of the Constitution and subsequent Lisbon Treaty, an opening has been created for a territorial approach. For the time being this makes further discussion on the need for an explicit planning competence superfluous. Also, despite the vagueness of the concept of territorial cohesion, it is clear that land use remains an exclusive right of the member states. Conceptually speaking there is a tendency to draw a distinction between spatial planning as a responsibility of the member states (and sub-national levels) and territorial cohesion policy (Schön, 2005). Also, the Germans have reconsidered their previous reservations. They now accept a limited Community role, although suspicion remains that the Commission will use territorial cohesion as a pretext to assign competences to itself which it at present does not have (Faludi, 2004a).

2.7 Lobbying for spatial planning?

Having read the above, and leaving the competence issue aside, the question arises of why there is no spatial planning competence if all the actors of importance seem to be advocating such a policy. For this there is no straightforward answer. Clearly, however, there has never been a sufficiently strong enough lobby prior to an IGC. There are a few explanations for this. First, as has become clear above, spatial planning as a concept is all but straightforward. For a start, the English 'town and country planning' has a different connotation than the French *l'aménagement du territoire* or the German *Raumordnung*, for which spatial planning forms the Euro-English equivalent (Williams, 1996). So those in favour of a 'spatial planning' competence first have to find out what exactly they are promoting. Secondly, who should be the lobbyists? Whereas most lobbies are organised around single-issue topics, spatial planning potentially comprises many different aspects and contested principles.

A third explanation is that at most only half of all the member states have something like a spatial planning tradition at national level. Some of these countries consider a spatial planning policy at EU level premature, and it is obviously then a bridge too far for member states without such a tradition.

There are other possible ways as well. After all, Michel Barnier has, in his capacity as European Commissioner and member of the Praesidium of the European Convention (the body that prepared the Draft Constitution) successfully entered the concept of territorial cohesion in the Constitutional Treaty. In fact, this was the second time that he was successful. As French minister for European Affairs he lobbied at the IGC in Amsterdam to enter the concept in the EC-Treaty in Article 16, where it had a narrow meaning related to providing services of general economic interest. In both cases a range of (predominantly French) politicians and organisations such as the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions (CPMR), the Assembly of European Regions (AER) and also the Committee of the Regions backed Barnier (Husson, 2002; Faludi, 2004a). Obviously, as explained above, territorial cohesion as interpreted by this coalition is a different, more narrowly defined concept than spatial planning. Although the European Convention received amendments regarding territorial cohesion from only nine out of 28 countries it still decided to include it in the Constitution (Zonneveld & Waterhout, 2005; see Chapter 4 of this book). The decisive factor was Michel Barnier himself, who had a personal interest in the matter as well as direct access to the centre of decision-making.

Apparently, such a combination, united as it was in one single person, is more forceful than the five above-mentioned EU organisations, which, as should be noted, have never used their powers in a collective effort. The absence of formal routes that bring them together on this topic may explain this. However, if they really wanted it, nothing could really prevent the key players from convening meetings and moving up together. What seems to be missing, though, as regards spatial planning, is informal bonding, shared ideas amongst all the players and, perhaps most of all, a sense of urgency.

The lack of shared ideas showed, for example, during the negotiations over the Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 when the new objective 3 of the structural funds called European Territorial Co-operation (ETC), of which the INTERREG programme is part was the subject of a debate in which the Commission, the European Council and the Parliament strongly disagreed with each other. As Table 2.3 shows, the Commission and Parliament judge transnational and interregional co-operation important whereas the European Council only considers cross-border co-operation important. During the long and winding negotiations, which culminated in an agreement on 16 December 2005 (UK Presidency, 2005), the Council drastically downsized the allocated amounts to transnational and interregional co-operation from € 6 and € 1 billion respectively. Thanks to the European Parliament, which rejected the agreement of the Council altogether, an extra 4 billion Euro was added to the total EU

Table 2.3 The influence of key players on the European Territorial Co-operation budget 2007-2013, in euros

	Commission proposal (14 July 2004)	European Council Budget Agreement (16 December 2005)	European Parliament (4 April 2006)
European Territorial Co-operation (ETC)	13 bn (4% of Structural Funds budget (SF))	7,5 bn (2,4% of Structural Funds budget (SF))	7,75 bn (2,5% of Structural Funds budget (SF))
Cross Border Co-operation	6 bn (45% of ETC)	5,7 bn (77% of ETC)	5,6 bn (74% of ETC)
Transnational Co-operation	6 bn (45% of ETC)	1,4 bn (19% of ETC)	1,6 bn (20% of ETC)
Interregional Co-operation	1 bn (10% of ETC)	0,3 bn (4% of ETC)	0,4 bn (5% of ETC)

Based on: CEC (2004b); UK Presidency (2005); EP (2006); CEC (2006)

2007-2013 budget (€ 862 billion), of which € 300 million was allocated to transnational and interregional cooperation (EP 2006). Also, whereas € 300 million may seem like peanuts, it has resulted amongst others in a doubling of the budget for ESPON and in this sense is of significant importance for a further institutionalisation of a territorial dimension in EU politics as well as possibly developing shared ideas among key players.

Institutional power is, after all, not only determined by formal organisations, legislation and large budgets, but to a large extent also by informal ties and shared beliefs among key players. In the planning literature this has been referred to as a planning community (Faludi & Van der Valk, 1994). Such a community or, in terms of Hajer (2000), discourse coalition exists of various types of actors such as politicians, practitioners, researchers and journalists who at an abstract level are all committed to the same ideology or discourse, in this case the idea that there should be attention paid to the territorial dimension in EU politics. Note that sharing the same ideology does not imply that there is agreement about how to operationalise it. Nevertheless, as Hajer (1995) has shown for environmental policies and Faludi and Van der Valk (1994) for planning in the Netherlands, such a planning community can be of great importance for further institutionalising territorial thinking. Arguably, the key challenge for integrating a territorial dimension in EU policies is to develop convincing storylines about the added value of a spatial approach and to create a sense of urgency in order to get the players mobilised.

2.8 Concluding remarks

Currently a spatial approach is not formally integrated in EU policies. To address territorial development issues at the EU level the informal meeting of ministers responsible for spatial planning and development together with DG Regio developed the ESDP in 1999 and adopted in May 2007 the Territorial Agenda of the EU. These initiatives alongside INTERREG (which is continued under ETC) and ESPON have received positive acclaim from the European Par-

liament, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee. Since the EU is bound to the Treaties, a logical way to ensure a territorial dimension in EU policies is by introducing a new competence. Entering the concept of territorial cohesion in the (rejected) Constitution and its replacement the Lisbon Treaty is considered a huge step forward. However, a closer look at the key players, in particular the Commission and the Council, reveals a mixed picture. Whereas DG Regio can be regarded as a supporter of a territorial approach, other DGs are less enthusiastic. Moreover, within the Council only a minority of the member states puts real effort into development of a territorial policy. It is no wonder therefore that the European Council easily reached consensus on downsizing the budget for transnational cooperation.

Focussing on formal treaty competences, however, is not everything. Since the millennium attention in the EU has increasingly been shifting towards informal policy practices, or in other words governance. Governance refers to how formal powers are being used. The Commission's White paper on Governance relates it to the principles of openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence (CEC, 2001). In this sense it has been argued that the whole competence issue is superfluous and that a territorial dimension in EU politics or more strategic planning approach can be introduced anyhow (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002; Faludi, 2004b). This reminds us of the rhetoric of the European Commission as expressed above. In a similar vein the Territorial Agenda does not intend to create new competences or legislation but primarily focuses on achieving its ambitions through informal structures of cooperation. The Open Method of Co-ordination has been mentioned as one way to go (Faludi, 2004b; 2007). This method is applied in the Lisbon strategy and forms a middle road between the Community method and intergovernmental approach. Basically, under OMC member states agree on common goals but remain exclusively responsible for their implementation, controlled only through a system of providing regular feedback to the other member states and peer pressure. In fact, the ESDP and Territorial Agenda processes already show quite some similarities with this method.

Be that as it may, what seems to be missing is a commonly felt sense of urgency among all the key players. For many the stories about the need for a territorial dimension in EU policies, as voiced in the ESDP and the Territorial Agenda, simply do not sound convincing enough. If they did, a territorial dimension, be it formally or informally, would have been firmly institutionalised by now. So, the main challenge is to create a sense of urgency. Apart from the unlikely event of a disaster happening that immediately convinces all parties of the necessity of integrating a territorial dimension in EU politics, the most promising way to go is to develop a planning community or discourse coalition with a shared ideology. It has been shown that such a community can develop strong institutional powers.

There are already signs of an emerging planning community, with the actors involved in the Territorial Agenda and the management of the INTER-REG and ESPON programmes forming an inner circle, and the practitioners and researchers carrying out projects under INTERREG and ESPON as a second circle. The link between the two circles is still a weak one, though, as many practitioners are barely aware of the ESDP principles that feed the INTER-REG and ESPON programmes (Waterhout & Stead, 2007, see Chapter 7 of this book). More emphasis in the future on the relation between the various building blocks of the European spatial development policy 'in the making' and better dialogue between the actors in the inner and outer circles could lead to a further elaborated and stronger ideology which binds a developing planning community. Now that a territorial cohesion competence seems a likely prospect, such an ideology could help spatial planners to influence the operationalisation of the still not crystallised territorial cohesion policy and make the best use of this opportunity.

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3 Polycentric development: What is behind it?

Introduction to Chapter 3

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During my work as a junior researcher at Nijmegen University, I was invited by the conve-nor, Andreas Faludi, to the first of what would become a succession of Lincoln seminars. It was organised on 29 and 30 June 2001 at the premises of the Lincoln Institute itself in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Having been put up in a suite of a luxurious 4 or 5-star hotel, with all my travel expenses paid for, a contract concerning the delivery of the paper and on top of that a $ 1000 bonus plus an invitation to the Harvard Faculty Club, this must have been about one of the most surreal experiences of a young researcher entering the world of international academic conferences. On trembling legs and with a barely adequate command of the English language I presented a paper on the concept of polycentric deve-lopment and how it formed a bridge between the cohesion and competitiveness objectives that are behind it.
This research is based in part on work done jointly with Andreas Faludi in the context of EURBANET, a project in the framework of the Community Initiative Interreg IIC for the North Western Metropolitan Area. The research institute OTB at Delft University of Tech-nology was the lead partner.
The chapter is considered relevant for this book because it zooms in on the planning community and how it overcame a looming deadlock by invoking the concept of polycen-tric development. Whereas polycentric development was a breakthrough in the political process leading to the ESDP, and liberated the community from engaging in further sub-stantive debate, it also left the community with some unsolved issues after the ESDP was adopted in 1999, when it had to find a new direction. Therefore in 2002 the ESPON 1.1.1 project 'Potentials for polycentric development in Europe' was launched, which was led by Nordregio and in which OTB was involved as a partner.

Note: For the purposes of this book the US-English spelling has been adapted to UK-English spelling.

Figure 3.1 Three spatial conceptualisations of Europe

Population desity > 200 inh./km²
EC-member
Non-EC-member

– – – – – · Core areas

0   500 km
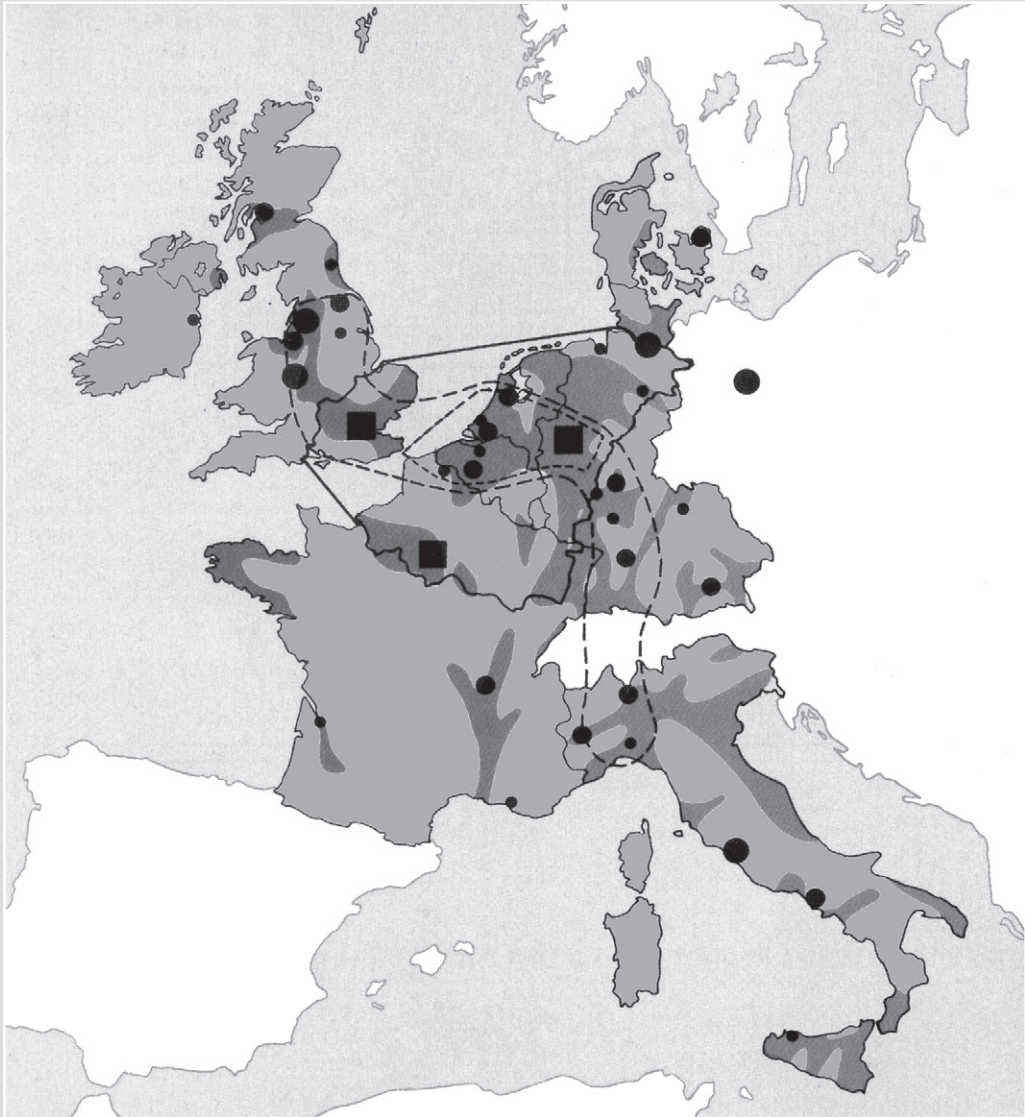
■ ≥5,000,000 inhabitants
● 1,000,000 - <5,000,000 inhabitants
● 500,000 - <1,000,000 inhabitants
• Other cities of European importance

Source: RPD (1978)

Polycentric development is the only substantive spatial planning concept in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) with the potential to integrate the interests of the many parties involved. Indeed, it will become clear that polycentric development has already formed this bridge among the perspectives of the member states.

In an unbalanced continent like Europe, with only one economic core area in the northwestern countries, interests diverge. With the Single Market and European Monetary Union both aiming to create a Europe-wide level playing field, competition among cities and regions will inevitably intensify. The situations of various cities and regions, however, are not the same (CEC, 1999), and spatial planners think they can help to alleviate this problem.

This is not the first time planners have tried to address the larger European scale (National Spatial Planning Agency, 2000). In 1955 northwest European planners met at the Conference of Regions of northwest Europe (CRONWE). Inspired by the concept of a megalopolis introduced by Jean Gottman (1961), CRONWE also identified its study area as a megalopolis, or at least in the process of becoming one. At the European level the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) has met since 1964. In 1986 a veritable structural outline for the Benelux countries saw the light of day. Common to these initiatives was the conceptualisation of Europe as a core and periphery (see Figure 3.1). Modest achievements in the Benelux area aside, however, none of the initiatives was successful in influencing policy (Zonneveld & Faludi, 1997; De Vries, 2002).

Since 1989 the ESDP process has been under way with Directorate General Regio. For the first time the member states have been able to formulate a joint spatial planning document, the most promising attempt so far to put spatial planning on the European policy map. The ESDP planners, however, have no real instruments to give their policies teeth. Their only chance is to formulate ideas that the outside world finds interesting. Fortunately, the underlying objectives of the ESDP correspond with those in the EU treaties: economic and social cohesion, competitiveness and sustainability. Whether this attempt will be enough to attract the interest of the outside world, however, remains to be seen. What is needed is something new, something that stirs up enthusiasm, like polycentric development.

The analytical concept policy theory is used in this chapter to explain the reasoning behind polycentric development. In doing so, the world behind the plan must be analysed, invoking two archetypes of spatial conceptualisation of Europe: the 'Blue Banana', which portrays Europe with a core and periphery, and the 'Bunch of Grapes', which reflects a more diversified view of Europe. The chapter discusses how polycentric development has been taken up after the completion of the ESDP, examines these archetypes and ends with some conclusions.

3.1　Policy theory: A joint construct

Reconstructing policy theory means laying bare the causal, final and normative assumptions involved in proposing or adopting a specific policy. In

a widely read paper, Hoogerwerf (1984: 495) introduced the concept of be-leidstheorie in Dutch, but not without first referring to other authors who invoked the same idea. For academic as well as practical purposes he claims the assumptions underlying policies are interesting to examine.

The complex assumptions underlying a policy theory consist of various elements, including assumptions about characteristics of the phenomena concerned and others about the relationships among these phenomena. The latter in particular give policy theory the character of a theory (Hoogerwerf, 1984: 501). Hoogerwerf distinguishes three types of relationships:

- principles and norms, either among one another, or between principles and norms on the one hand and the existing or expected situation on the other hand (normative relationships);
- cause and effect (causal relationships);
- ends and means (instrumental or final relationships).

Polycentricity, as used in the ESDP, involves all of these relationships. The assumptions behind them can be broken down into conclusions and arguments. The Dutch literature refines this further (Pröpper & Reneman, 1993), but here, the distinctions above will suffice. The conclusions are what the policy under consideration, in this case the ESDP, states. They form the reference point for the reconstruction of the policy theory. The policy analyst's task is to reveal the arguments behind these conclusions, to say why the policy makers have concluded that the policy in question is the one they should adopt.

Since there is no established model for reconstructing a policy theory, the analyst can encounter various problems. One complicating factor is that policy makers are not always aware of the assumptions they make. In many cases the policy theory is perhaps just the unintended outcome of a complex process of interaction among various stakeholders. This certainly has been the case with the ESDP. It is clear that the final policy document provides an insufficient basis for understanding the policy theory behind it. Once again, the final text acts as the reference point for reconstructing the policy theory because it represents the conclusions of a process. What should be borne in mind, however, is that these conclusions are the result of compromises that, if only up to a point, have succeeded in satisfying the concerns of all participants in the process. In European spatial planning, where one is dealing with strategic policies, one often finds a strong correlation among the multi-interpretability of a policy text and the complexity of the process that has led to it (Teisman, 2000).

Thus, every stakeholder and every addressee can and must translate the often vague and abstract policy conclusions into terms amenable to their situation. (This may be true for any sort of text; see Faludi & Korthals Altes, 1994.) In reconstructing a policy theory, one needs to explore the world behind the plan where various actors pursue various interests. The world behind the

ESDP includes 15 EU member states and the European Commission interacting with each other in a highly politicised context.

3.2   Polycentricity: the core concept in the ESDP

Before turning to the world behind the ESDP, this section discusses the chief outcome of the ESDP process as well as the key conclusion of the policy theory: polycentricity. Davoudi (1999: 368) comes to the same conclusion: "One of the most central yet least clear concepts in the ESDP is the concept of polycentricity." A second key conclusion is the concept of application, which has more to do with procedures and is not the object of this chapter.

Why is polycentric development a key concept? Because it stands for a balanced, sustainable form of development of the European territory, terms that figure in the subtitle of the ESDP: "Toward Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the European Union." This subtitle encapsulates the three objectives underlying the ESDP:
■ economic and social cohesion;
■ conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage;
■ more balanced competitiveness of the European territory (CEC, 1999: 10).

A second reason stems from ESDP's Chapter 3 on policy aims and options for the territory of the EU, which sets out the policy options for European spatial development under three spatial development guidelines:
■ polycentric spatial development and a new urban-rural partnership;
■ parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge;
■ wise management of the natural and cultural heritage.

The ESDP variously refers to polycentricity but makes no explicit study of it, so the concept remains vague. In the second half of 2000, however, the French Presidency (2000a) made the concept the focus of its attention. The outcome was an analysis of ESDP policy options from the perspective of polycentricity. As usual in the ESDP process the document is based primarily on the answers of CSD delegations to a questionnaire. On this basis, the French document points out that polycentricity relates not only to the first but also to all three spatial development guidelines stated above.

Polycentricity also can be defined on the continental, national and regional, and urban and peri-urban scale, where the ESDP deals with functional relations among towns and rural areas, and with cooperation within metropolitan areas. The French document is concerned first and foremost with the continental and transnational scale as the most appropriate for any overall consideration of the ESDP. This scale is what political options (1) and (2) of the ESDP are about:

- "Strengthening of several larger zones of global economic integration in the EU, equipped with high-quality, global functions and services, including the peripheral areas, through transnational spatial development strategies."
- "Strengthening a polycentric and more balanced system of metropolitan regions, city clusters and city networks, through closer co-operation between structural policy and the policy on the Trans-European Networks (TENs) and improvement of the links between international/national and regional/local transport networks (CEC, 1999: 21)."

These two options are based on the notion that

> [t]he concept of polycentric development has to be pursued, to ensure regionally balanced development, because the EU is becoming fully integrated in the global economy. Pursuit of this concept will help to avoid further excessive economic and demographic concentration in the core area of the EU. The economic potential of all regions of the EU can only be utilised through the further development of a more polycentric European settlement structure. The greater competitiveness of the EU on a global scale demands a stronger integration of the European regions into the global economy (CEC, 1999: 20).

Strengthening several world-ranking economic integration zones is the response to the present, monocentric spatial structure of Europe. After all, the ESDP identifies "only one outstanding larger geographical zone of global economic integration: the core area of the EU, the pentagon defined by the metropolises of London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Hamburg" (CEC, 1999: 20). In this pentagon, about 50 percent of the EU's total GDP is produced by 40 percent of the EU citizens on 20 percent of the total area of the EU (CEC, 1999: 8). Hence the '20-40-50 pentagon', as a German expert called a map he produced after the event (see Figure 3.2). This is considered to be a problem. The distribution of such zones in Europe "differs from that of the USA, for instance, which has several outstanding economic integration zones on a global scale: West Coast (California), East Coast, Southwest (Texas), Midwest" (CEC, 1999: 20). Figure 3.3 offers an interpretation of the more balanced distribution of economic integration zones in the USA.

Achievement of a more polycentric development depends on cooperation and promotion of complementarity. The ESDP is clear about who should cooperate with whom, but not about how this can be attained.

> [W]ays and procedures must be found to enable cities and regions to complement each other and cooperate.... As well as city networks at regional level, the need for complementing cooperation also applies to city networks at interregional, transnational or even European level.... Promoting complementarity...means simultaneously building on the advantages and overcoming of disadvantages of economic competition.... However, complementarity should not be focused solely on economic competition but be expanded to

Figure 3.2 The '20-40-50 Pentagon': just one global economic integration zone in the EU...

Pentagon area
Area outside the core
Non-EU-member

0 ——— 500 km

Source: Schön (2000)

all urban functions, such as culture, education and knowledge, and social infrastructure (CEC, 1999: 21).

The document of the French Presidency elaborates on the same theme. Accordingly, a more balanced spatial organisation of Europe is all the more necessary because hyperconcentration results in diseconomies, including congestion, pollution, property inflation and the negative impacts on peripheral

Figure 3.3 ...compared with four global economic integration zones in the U.S.

South of the Great Lakes

East Coast

West Coast

South

■ ≥ 5,000,000 inhabitants

● 2,000,000 – < 5,000,000 inhabitants

• 750,000 – < 2,000,000 inhabitants

⬭ Existing zone of significant global integration

0   500 km
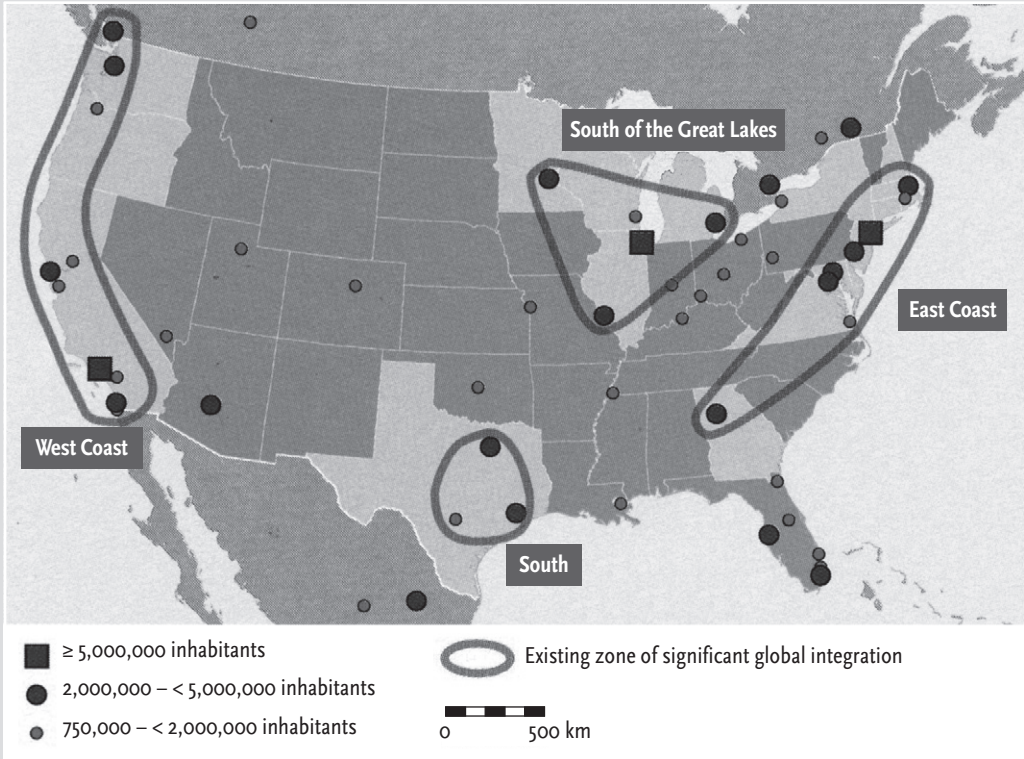
Source: Mehlbye (2000, p. 757)

areas. Like the makers of the ESDP, the French regard stimulation of new global economic integration zones in peripheral areas and coastal zones as the fundamental ESDP strategy. At the level of the whole European continent, this is what polycentricity amounts to: stimulating areas outside the existing core to aspire to the status of global economic integration zones.

3.3 Combining interests

This section explains how the concept of polycentricity came into the ESDP. Two well-known metaphorical conceptualisations of the organisation of the European territory are the Blue Banana (Brunet, 1989) and the Bunch of Grapes (Kunzmann & Wegener, 1991; Kunzmann, 1998) (Figures 3.4 and 3.5). These may be considered as archetypes of how to conceptualise the spatial organisation of Europe. The first represents a one-dimensional view, considering only indicators like densities and economic performance. The view of Europe underlying the allocation of structural funds, in particular those under Objective 1, is a good example (Figure 3.6). The second represents a more subtle, more diversified view, taking account of more indicators. It demonstrates a willingness to look closely at individual regions and their specific characteristics. Economic performance is just one dimension, neither more nor less im-

Figure 3.4 The blue banana indicating the (core) area with most cities with more than 200.000 inhabitants

Dorsale
Dépendances
Nord du Sud
Assililés
Finisterres
«Suds»
Lacune
Liaisons avec l'Est?
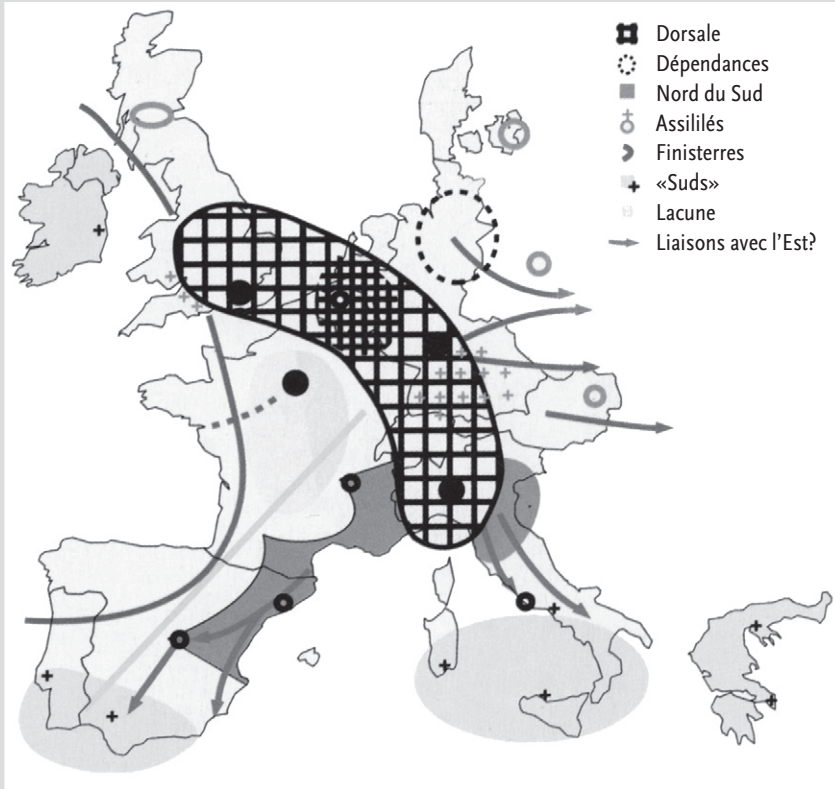
Source: Brunet (1989)

portant than others. In a schematic way, the Bunch of Grapes illustrates physical and cultural diversity in Europe.

There is another difference as well. The Blue Banana shows the situation as it is, while the Bunch of Grapes represents an idea of how Europe should develop. In policy theory, this normative relationship underlies the policy conclusions of the ESDP.

The Italians held the first meeting after Nantes, and set the process on a track of cohesion thinking. A long-time recipient of EU funding, the Italians conceptualised Europe as the Blue Banana with a core and a periphery. In their 1990 Presidency document, the Italians simply spoke of a circle with a radius of 500 km around Luxembourg as the core. They pleaded for a cohesive policy to remedy the continuing division of Europe into a centre and periphery, and they linked this to an investment strategy for the structural funds based on a one-dimensional view of Europe (Presidenza consiglio dei Ministri, 1990). Clearly, with the Single Market in the offing, they feared further deterioration of their economic position in relation to the northwestern part of the European Community.

Many others shared this view of prosperous regions benefiting more from the Single Market than those less favoured. The disappearance of the Iron

Figure 3.5 The 'bunch of grapes' representing a diversified view of the EU

Source: Kunzmann & Wegener (1991)

Curtain and the opening up of new markets led to even greater disparities. So the Italians set the ESDP process on a track of assuming a causal relationship between the Single Market and increasing disparities which from then on would dominate the proceedings. Consequently, the focus was mainly on developing final relationships aimed at economic and social cohesion.

As could have been expected, however, member states located in the core of Europe were eager to shift attention to their concerns, and they introduced a new discourse with final relationships aimed at a different goal. Thus, a year later the Dutch Presidency brought attention to the problems in Europe's highly urbanised core and to European global competitiveness. The Dutch drew inspiration from their *Fourth National Spatial Planning Report* (Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning and the Environment, 1988) and from a follow-up study, Perspectives in Europe (Verbaan *et al.*, 1991). The latter focused on northwest Europe while trying to identify suitable spatial planning strategies. The study was translated into English and disseminated among the member states, but failed to have much influence because of the singularly Dutch viewpoints it represented (National Spatial Planning Agency, 2000).

Both documents had a strong economic bias. "Spatial planning should aim at supporting and accommodating modern trends in society and economic development. Good use must be made of the endogenous potential of cities and regions" (Verbaan *et al.*, 1991: 127; translation by this author). Economic development, in this view, depended on numerous criteria like cultural and

Figure 3.6 Objective 1 investments, 2001-2006

Canarias (E)

Guadeloupe   Martinique   Réunion
(F)   (F)   (F)

Guyane (F)

Açores (P)

Madeira (P)

- Objective 1 funding regions
- Phaseing-out regions
- Phaseing-out regions
- Non-EU-countries

0   500 km
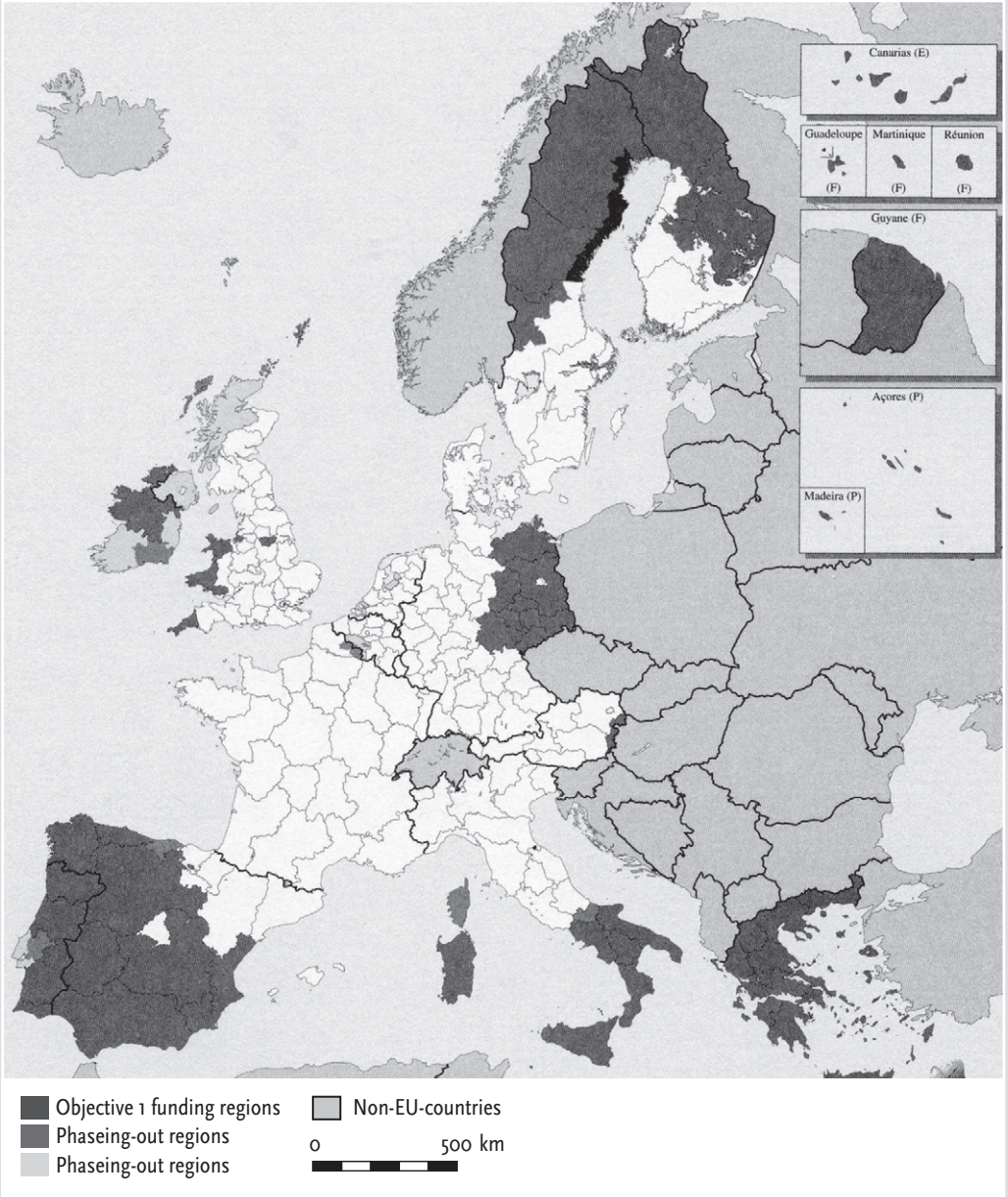
Courtesy of CEC (1999)

natural heritage, quality of water, air and soil, diversity and many others that
are often subsumed under the term quality of life. As Table 3.1 shows, while
the Italians invoked the normative principle that European spatial planning
policy should support economic and social cohesion, the Dutch started from a
different normative position.

The complementary causal relationship was that European global competi-

Table 3.1 Italian and Dutch policy theories

	Italian Presidency document (1990)	Dutch Presidency (1991)
Normative relationship	European spatial planning aims at social and economical cohesion	European spatial planning aims at accommodating modern trends in society and economic development
Causal relationship	Single market will increase disparities between core and periphery	Europe's economic performance depends on the well-being of its core area
Final relationship	Peripheral regions must be better linked to the core and their development should be encouraged by inward investment strategies	Problems in the core need to be addressed and regions outside the core should use their endogenous potential and be linked to each other and the core

tiveness largely depended on the well-being of its core area. At least this was what had been learned from the domestic situation in the early 1980s, when The Netherlands suffered from severe economic recession (Zonneveld, 2000). As a reaction the Dutch pursued a national policy called "regions under their own steam", based on the view that regions, especially peripheral ones, needed to make better use of their endogenous potentials. A fundamental belief was that the national economy depended to a large extent on the well-being of its economic core, the Randstad. By way of analogy, it was assumed that this also applied to Europe (see Table 3.1).

The Dutch and Italian policy theories summarised in Table 3.1 represent the two diametrically opposing views on which member states took positions. To formulate a joint spatial planning strategy, these two views had to be merged.

The Dutch took great strides in this direction. In their Presidency document, Urban Networks in Europe (Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning and the Environment, 1991), they forged a link between their own interests and the principle of social and economic cohesion. In a European context they learned that the latter (before the ESDP process planners had no international experience) could never be neglected. What they proposed was to develop urban networks throughout Europe. One of many incarnations of polycentricity, according to the Dutch, this concept could capture both the objectives of cohesion and competitiveness, and would also legitimise more balanced attention to prospering and lagging regions.

The Dutch based this approach on existing spatial conceptualisations of Europe by Brunet and the Europe 2000 report (CEC, 1991). These included the Blue Banana and an emergent core zone, the Sunbelt (Schmidt & Sinz, 1993), which formed an arc from Valencia and Madrid in Spain via Barcelona and Marseilles in France to Tuscany and Venice in Italy (see Figure 3.4). Note, however, that its development potential does not go unquestioned (Tönnies, 2001). Moreover, the Dutch had a differentiated view of Europe's spatial organisation. Not all regions in the core were doing well, nor were all regions outside the core lagging. By linking the primary urban regions of Europe to each other and by linking secondary urban networks to them, regions outside the core were expected to become more competitive, thus improving Europe's competitiveness as a whole (see Figure 3.7).

The Portuguese Presidency (1992) continued along the same lines. Inspired by their own location, the Portuguese emphasised inadequate connections from the periphery to the core. In 1993 the Danish stressed the importance of

Figure 3.7 Urban network in Europe

> 5,000,000 inh.
> 1,000,000 inh.
> 500,000 inh.
> 100,000 inh.
> 60,000 inh.

0   500 km
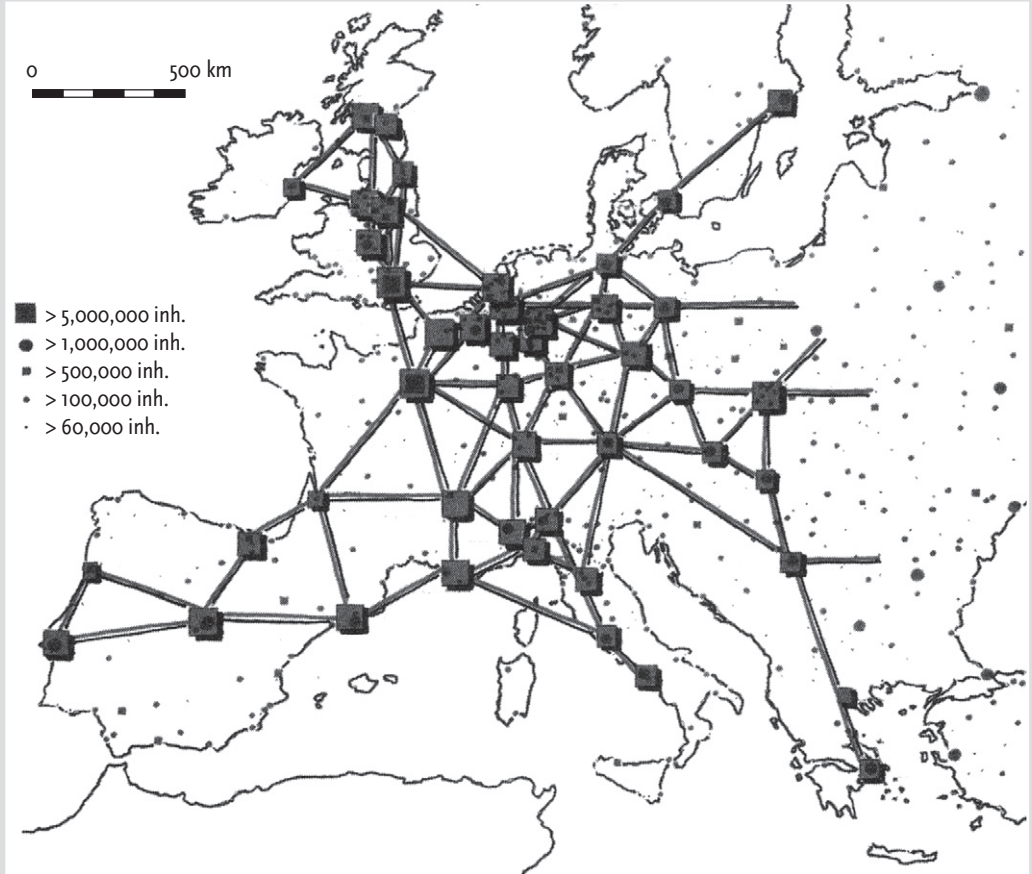
Source: Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning and the Environment (1991)

a high-quality environment. All these objectives were described partly or fully in European infrastructure networks, urban networks or a European urban network consisting of various levels of integration and with a new rural-urban relationship. The terms decentralisation, deconcentration and redistribution (of seaports and airports) were also used. The Danish and the Dutch in particular had carefully worked out their preferences, combining them with those of others, into a strategy wherein the concept of polycentric development (or a similar concept) played an important role.

After four-and-a-half years of discussions, almost all objectives of various member states were combined under the concept of polycentric development, which also had become central in the Leipzig Principles of 1994. These principles, officially named Principles for a European Spatial Development Policy, were the product of the Committee on Spatial Development (Bundesministerium für Raumordnung, Bauwesen und Städtebau, 1995). They represent interim conclusions of the ESDP process setting the agenda for future discussions.

The Leipzig document identified two of the three fundamental goals in the ESDP: economic and social cohesion and sustainable development. The Dutch

attempt to introduce the issue of competitiveness was less clearly visible. By then the three spatial development guidelines, including the one on balanced polycentric development, also had been developed. The Leipzig document took an intermediate position between the Blue Banana and the Bunch of Grapes. The Blue Banana was the point of reference and the Bunch of Grapes, although not explicitly stated, was the desired outcome. Developing a poly-centric system of cities in Europe was seen as a way of bringing the periph-ery closer to the core, but there was as yet no suggestion as to how to realise something akin to the Bunch of Grapes.

From then on the context changed. In comparison with the late-1980s and early-1990s the prospects for European integration worsened. The communa-utarian approach lost out to the intergovernmental approach. Growing reluc-tance surfaced about transferring competencies to the European Community. Furthermore, there was more conflict over the Community budget. Reacting to Agenda 2000, the net contributors in the EU grew more concerned about their financial burden (Laffan, 2000: 739).

The successive French, Spanish and Italian presidencies witnessed these effects, so there was little progress. The status of the CSD and of the ESDP in the making was unclear, thus causing additional problems. The moot point was whether the ESDP (if it would ever come to pass) should influence the structural funds, which was especially relevant for the Southern Europeans led by Spain. The Spanish government took note of the ESDP process and lim-ited the mandate of its delegation to a minimum. Other member states also grew more reluctant, albeit less overtly.

With another presidency in the offing the Dutch were determined to end the wavering. Joining the delegation of DG XVI, they introduced a set of new working principles. Relieved that the discussion would finally come to an end, the other delegations agreed to let the troika (the previous, next and present presidency plus the Commission) write the document. Based on previous presidency and CSD documents, the troika succeeded in preparing a succes-sion of drafts. Finally in June 1997 at Noordwijk the Dutch Presidency proudly presented the first official draft ESDP (CEC, 1997). Before the approval of this Noordwijk document, however, two debates relating to polycentric develop-ment were needed.

The first concerned a simple and apparently innocent map (Figure II.1 in the Noordwijk document (CEC, 1997)). It shows the shape of the EU, the distanc-es between Greece and Ireland and Finland and Spain, population densities, and natural physical barriers like seas and mountain ranges. The version of the map that went before the CSD was the same as the map that finally made it into the Noordwijk document, the difference being that the published ver-sion failed to depict the core of Europe (see Figure 3.8), because the latter did not please member states from Southern Europe. The proposed map reflected a centre-periphery model of Europe (an early version in the files even carried

Figure 3.8 Elliptical shape indicating the core

0		500 km	

ca 4,500 km

ca 3,500 km

▬▬▬	Countour of EU-territory, bordering land		———	Internal EU-borders
▬▬▬	Countour of EU-territory, bordering sea		←– –→	Max. distance within contour
ᗯᗯ	Physical barrier: sea		▬▬	Population density high
ᗯᗯ	Physical barrier: land		▬▬	Population density medium
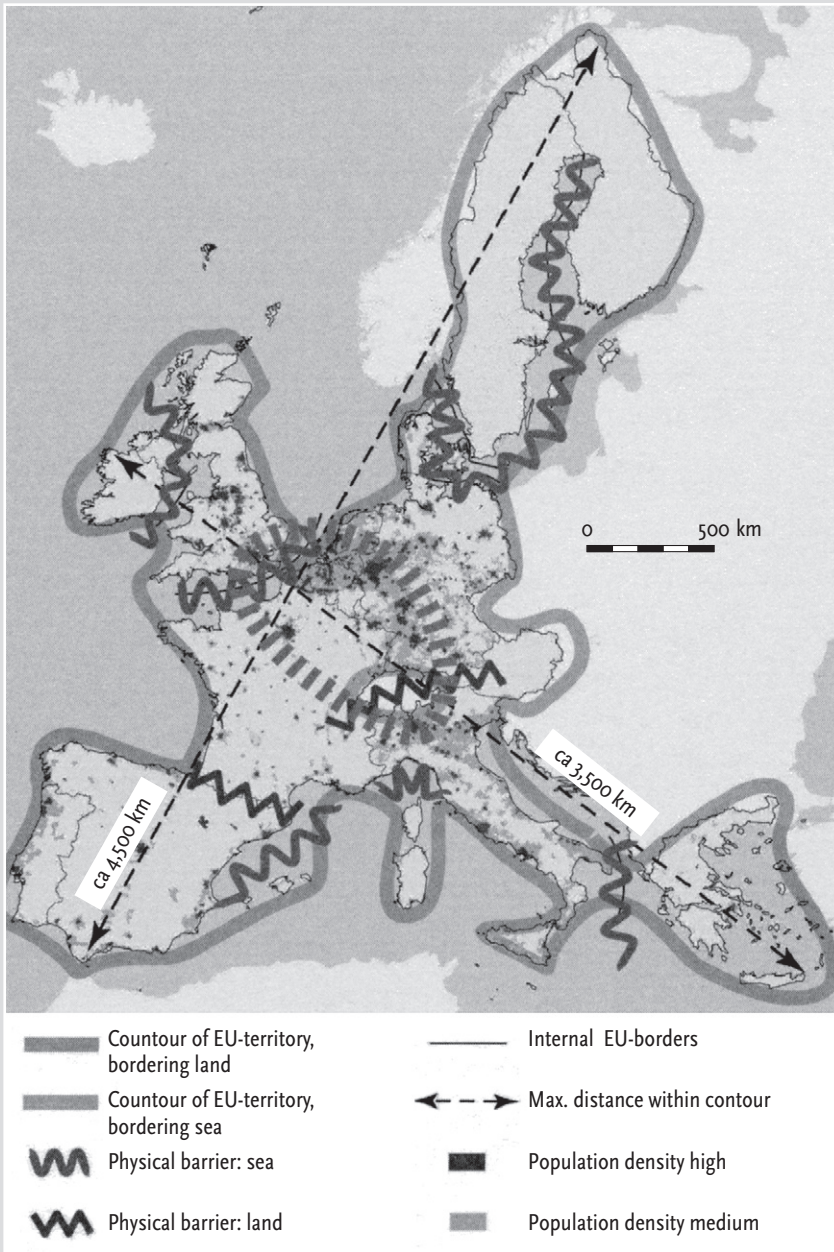
Sources: Archives of the Dutch National Spatial Planning Agency; Faludi & Waterhout (2002)

this title), with a juxtaposition of strong and weak regions. In the beginning it had been Southern Europeans who had identified disparities as the central issue. To represent this on a map, however, was controversial. In the end, leaving the core of Europe off the map (Figure II.1, Noordwijk document (CEC, 1997)), the shape of the European territory in the first official draft represented

a compromise. Apparently, the Blue Banana thinking was no longer acceptable.

A second debate about competitiveness was occurring simultaneously, and may have amplified the first. Since the meeting under the Dutch Presidency in 1991, the issue of competitiveness had been crowded out by that of cohesion. Compared to the problems in the core, the problems in the periphery were much greater and this may be the reason. The Dutch, whose planning philosophy had not changed, however, reintroduced the issue of competitiveness. Located in the core of Europe, they could be trusted to do so.

The Dutch and the other troika members (Ireland and Luxembourg) proposed a third basic goal to the ESDP, namely competitiveness within the European territory. This may have made southern member states unhappy about the elliptical shape on the map discussed above. Nevertheless, the Spanish delegation was unhappy with the formulation of this third goal. Well aware of Dutch ideas, they probably judged the concept of competitiveness dangerous, in that it could have led to northwest European claims on the structural funds. Contrary to Dutch thinking, cohesion countries often argue that European competitiveness as a whole depends on the quality of the competition among its regions, which is what cohesion policy is designed to stimulate. Consequently, Spain proposed the addition of the word balanced before competitiveness, so the third basic goal of the ESDP became "balanced competitiveness within the European territory".

Balanced competitiveness surely has a more polycentric ring to it than simply "competitiveness within the European territory". Since the Blue Banana thinking had been rejected, the ESDP planners moved closer to the philosophy behind Europe as a Bunch of Grapes. There was still no solution, however, as to how to portray Europe in its true shape – that of a centre and a periphery – while simultaneously discussing cohesion strategy and strategies for improving Europe's competitiveness. Cohesion and competitiveness were still mutually exclusive when related to a core-periphery model. The concept of polycentricity alone could not solve this dilemma, nor did the addition of the qualifier 'balanced' before competitiveness. Both objectives were considered necessary, however, and therefore the makers of the first official draft of the ESDP chose not to visualise the shape of Europe.

After Noordwijk, the ESDP process went smoothly, and the Noordwijk document provided a sound basis for further elaboration. After the 1998 meeting in Glasgow, where the complete draft ESDP was approved, it was up to the Germans to bring the process to a conclusion under their presidency in May 1999.

Precisely who made the proposal – whether the Germans or the Commission officials on the troika (Commission officials always participated in troika meetings) – is not clear, but during this period a solution was finally found: the concept of polycentric development combined with the development, based on their endogenous potential, of global economic integration zones. The European territory in the ESDP is described in the vein of the Blue Banana,

with a core, the pentagon, and a periphery. The ESDP vision (described verbally only), however, reflects more the idea of the European Bunch of Grapes with several core zones. In this way, the EDSP bridged the gap between the two archetypes of European spatial conceptualisation: the Blue Banana and the European Bunch of Grapes.

3.4   Polycentric development: A bridging concept

Polycentricity is the outcome of a political, rather than a theoretical, debate between two normative viewpoints. As such, the viewpoints have not changed, rather they have been linked together by invoking the concept of polycentricity. As a consequence, the exact meaning of the concept in practice remains vague. Research in 1999 pointed out that even among the members of the CSD there is no common understanding of polycentricity (Waterhout & Faludi, 2001). This is hardly surprising, given the suboptimal conditions under which the CSD operates, leaving little room for open discussions and mutual learning. "To be acceptable to delegates, concepts invoked in the work of the CSD have to be broadly defined" (Waterhout & Faludi, 2001: 107).

The literature on European integration shows broad concepts accommodating different objectives meant to avoid deadlock. "A…way to reach a consensus in bargaining processes is to settle for a framework decision, phrased in such vague terms as to allow actors with diverging views to interpret it according to their individual interests" (Héritier 1999, 17). Indeed, from the outset the ESDP was meant to be a framework.

Vague concepts might thus be unavoidable in European policy making. Considering its heterogeneous composition and the complex institutional setup involving 15 member states and the Commission as it does, it could hardly be otherwise. In such an environment, "regimes around which actors [sic] expectations can converge are needed: the European Community puts a premium on the ability to provide convincing policy concepts and their interpretation" (Eising & Kohler-Koch, 1999: 275).

Eising and Kohler-Koch refer to belief systems revolving around broad orientations toward solidarity and reciprocity and the search for consensus, following the consociational ordering principle. They distinguish among three types of concepts and principles. First, substantial concepts relate to policy content, the goals to be attained and the instruments to be employed. Second and third, procedural and distributive principles pertain to the EC system as such. An example of the former is subsidiarity and of the latter is the cohesion principle. Clearly, polycentricity is a substantive concept, but it also includes elements of a distributive concept. Such concepts are necessarily vague, and "their normative relevance as well as their prescriptive elements are often disputed and subject to divergent interpretations…." (1999: 277).

Bridging concepts, therefore, are needed to reconcile differences.

Even within the European Commission or individual member state governments, actors are in need of bridging concepts. Being responsible for different tasks within the administration, they identify with exclusive policy philosophies. Environmental policy is a good example of how a common denominator had to be found to break a deadlock. 'Sustainability' was the formula used by environmentalists within the Commission in order to present their strategies in a way which was also acceptable to their colleagues form other DGs.... (1999: 278-279).

This is an example of an attempt to formulate what Kohler-Koch (1999, 30) calls hegemonic concepts. It is also what the makers of the ESDP have attempted to do by supplying persuasive concepts to gain the ear of policy makers. To gain acceptance, however, they had to invoke flexible and even amorphous concepts like that of a polycentric system of cities in Europe. If successful, such albeit generalised bridging principles form the basis for further cooperation.

3.5 Polycentric development being taken seriously

With the ESDP on the books, polycentricity received much attention from policy makers, European-wide cooperation networks, consultants and academics. Debates on polycentricity at the regional and transnational scale intensified (see Dieleman & Faludi 1998; Kloosterman & Musterd, 2001; Albrechts, 2001; Houtum & Lagendijk, 2001), and a new debate on polycentricity has begun at the continental level. Three documents are of importance: the French Presidency document discussed above; its followup (French Presidency, 2000b); and the Second Report on Economic and Social Cohesion (CEC, 2001). All have drawn inspiration from the ESDP. In fact, the French Presidency documents are direct follow-ups to it.

The first document aimed at a better understanding of the concept of polycentricity. Taking an approach based on agglomeration rates and gateway functions, the second French document identifies potential global economic integration zones. It has been drawn up by a small group of independent consultants commissioned by the French planning agency DATAR, and presented to the CSD in December 2000. Going far beyond usual practices in the ESDP process, where mapmaking proved impossible, the document offers a tentative long-term spatial vision of Europe complete with maps (see Figure 3.9). Whether this second document will have a follow-up remains unclear.

The third policy document, the Second Report on Economic and Social Cohesion, is a flagship report of the European Commission (CEC, 2001). Important is Part 1.3 (Territorial Cohesion: Towards a More Balanced Development),

Figure 3.9 Possible development of new global economic integration zones

Les trois secteurs de polarisation périphérique potentiel

Corridors de developpement

BERLIN

Points d'appui et polarisation

Prague

Centre-Europe

Zone de polarisation Nord-Ouest

0   500 km
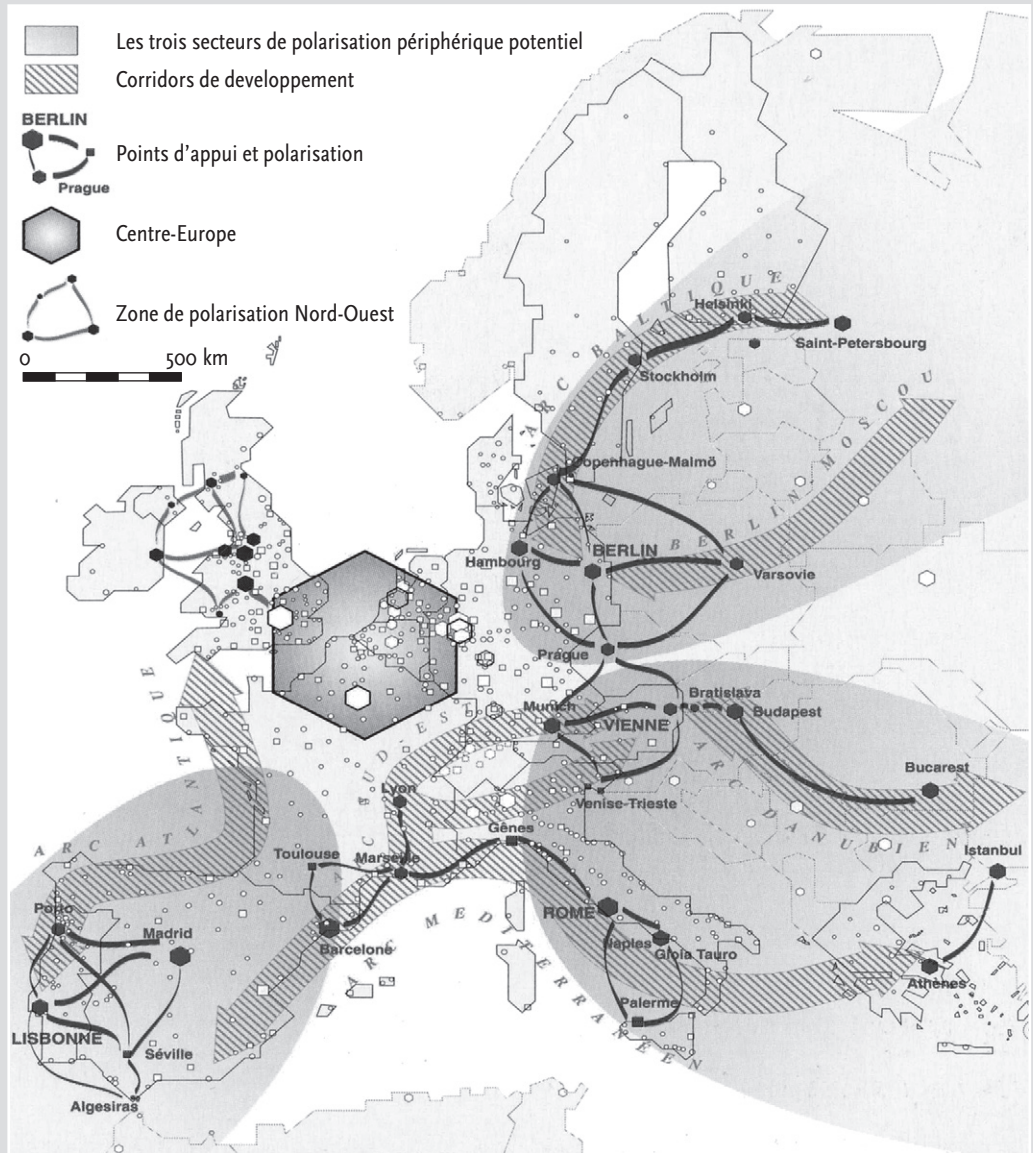
written by DG Regio officials of the same unit as was previously involved in the ESDP process. Interestingly, the ESDP is used to legitimise the view of DG Regio. The focus here, however, is mainly on the challenges of the eastern enlargement of the EU. Polycentric development is seen as the best way to achieve a more balanced territory. The report does not present a strategy, however, as does the ESDP by introducing the concept of global economic integration zones, let alone a spatial vision for Europe over, say, 20 years. What it promises is to lift the concept of polycentricity out of the small world of the

ESDP and introduce it into all Directorates General of the European Commission. In turn, they can go further by interjecting it into other EU policies.

More bottom-up initiatives come from other cooperation networks and advisers. An example of the first is the Metropolitan Regions Exchange network (METREX), comprising 36 European metropolitan regions and almost 60 individual authorities. It considers Europe as "a number of transnational areas within which there are, or could be, strong polycentric metropolitan relationships" (Read, 2000: 740; see Figure 3.10). This situation forms a sound basis for further development toward a better urban balance. An example of the latter is an alternative development perspective for Europe (Figure 3.11) meant to inspire actors within the megalopolises indicated. It was drawn up by Peter Mehlbye (2000), an independent consultant who formerly was involved in the ESDP process, first as an official of the Danish Ministry of Environment and Energy and later as a national expert at DG Regio. What is important here is that both examples are witness to some belief in the possibilities of a polycentric approach.

Academics have always been interested in polycentricity at the regional scale, but now, in the wake of the ESDP, they also focus on development at the scale of northwest Europe or even the EU as a whole (see Kunzmann, 1998; Böhme, 1999; Richardson & Jensen, 2000; Richardson, 2000; Krätke, 2001; Copus, 2001; Ache, 2001). At the same time, there is a lot of scepticism. There is the feeling that polycentricity is the outcome of a debate on normative relationships. In the ESDP, however, it is being presented as an instrument, a final relationship. To make matters worse, it is based on questionable causal relationships. At the very least, the ESDP fails to provide empirical evidence. These issues make the usefulness of a polycentric approach questionable.

It is exactly the bridging function of the concept of polycentricity that makes Krätke (2001) doubt its value. According to him "the ESDP might partly be judged as an 'idealistic' approach, particularly with regard to the notion of combining competitiveness and cohesion" (Krätke 2001, 106). He argues that current economic developments intensify competition among cities and regions and that, from a regional economic perspective, the European urban system can be understood as a system of competing locations. Competition, he argues, results in winners and losers. Thus "strengthening the competitive position of certain centres in the European urban system does not automatically entail a lasting improvement in the competitiveness of the pan-European urban system" (Krätke, 2001: 107).

Copus (2001) warns that, as a consequence of the political tensions in the ESDP process with civil servants acting within limited mandates, the theoretical underpinning of the ESDP and especially the concept of polycentric development is rather weak. Some of the proposals in the ESDP to promote polycentric development "are closer to 'ends' rather than to 'means', and no theoretical arguments are provided to make the case that such activities will stim-

Figure 3.10 Europe as a collection of transnational cooperation areas in order to achieve a better urban balance

Legend:
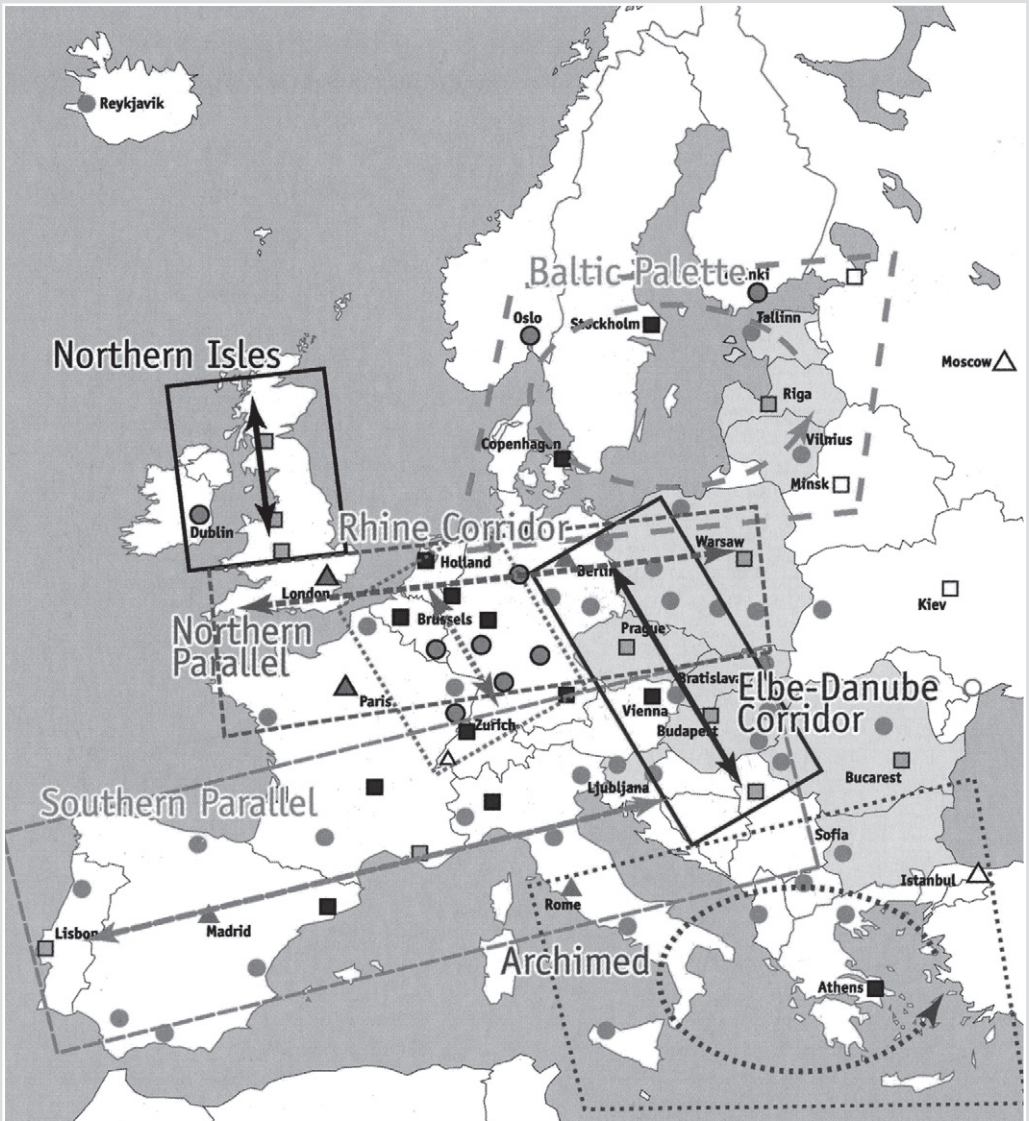
- ▲ International urban center
- ■ European urban center
- ⬤ National urban center
- ▲ International urban center to be developed with priority
- ◼ European urban center to be developed with priority
- ⬤ National urban center to be developed with priority
- △ International urban center to be developed in longer term
- ☐ European urban center to be developed in longer term
- ○ National urban center to be developed in longer term
- △ Urban center with specific international function (Zurich)

0 ————— 500 km

Figure 3.11 An invitation to metropolitan areas to cooperate

Agglomerations

■ ≥ 5,000,000 inh.

● 2,000,000 – 5,000,000 inh.

● 750,000 – 2,000,000 inh.

• Smaller capital cities in EU Member States and in Accession Countries

⬭ New global integration zones?

⬭ Existing zone of significant global integration

0   500 km

Source: Mehlbye (2000, p. 759)

ulate the desired forms of 'polycentric development'" (Copus, 2001: 549).

The concept of global economic integration zones receives critical attention from other authors as well. For instance, Ache (2001) devotes an entire paper to discussing whether the concept of global economic integration zones

is viable. One of his conclusions is that images such as the pentagon can be extremely powerful, but that there is a danger of oversimplification. Krätke, for his part, is of the opinion that the idea of "[d]eveloping additional world economic integration zones outside the core area of the EU would appear unrealistic in the light of the existing imbalances" (Krätke, 2001: 110).

It would be easy to quote more such comments on global economic integration zones, and on the ESDP, but to do so would go beyond the scope of this chapter. Suffice it to say that most authors try to help fill the theoretical vacuum. Some explicitly call for more critical research (Richardson & Jensen, 2000), which is exactly what the makers of the ESDP – arguing that it is just a first simple step in an ongoing process – have aimed for.

3.6 Conclusion

After ten years of discussing European spatial planning, in the absence of any competitors, polycentric development has become the key substantive concept in the ESDP. It serves as a bridging concept welding the views of various key actors together, thereby giving them sufficient incentive for staying in the game. To fulfil this role, the interpretation of the concept needed modification. Thus, the ESDP interpretation is different from that used in a national context, in that the concepts of endogenous development and global economic integration zones form part of the package deal. According to the French Presidency document, polycentricity contributes to all three ESDP objectives. Furthermore, by spanning the continent, it may also bind all European regions together.

In the ESDP polycentricity is seen as the vehicle for moving toward a Europe that, in the long term, develops from a highly centralised territory (indicated by the Blue Banana) to a balanced territory (symbolised by the Bunch of Grapes). The Bunch of Grapes represents an ideal and the ESDP vision lies somewhere en route to that end. The ESDP vision, however, is couched in terms of cohesion and competitiveness, which are diametrically opposed normative principles held by different groups of member states that have shaped the ESDP discussions. Thanks to the concept of polycentricity forming a bridge, both objectives could finally be integrated in the ESDP, keeping the process on an even keel. Polycentricity is thus much more the outcome of a debate on normative issues, rather than on causal and final relationships. Its prime function is to keep member states in the process, while providing an instrument for reaching the situation described by the Bunch of Grapes.

In the original meaning of the Bunch of Grapes, sustainability and diversity also have played important roles. They do so in the ESDP as well. From the perspective of polycentricity, however, their role in the ESDP debate has been minor. Because of the normative debate on cohesion and competitiveness, with polycentricity as the outcome, the ESDP also has an urban bias.

Polycentricity is first and foremost a concept relating to urban development. Given the theoretical vacuum in the ESDP debate, it is doubtful whether polycentricity will be the right instrument for reaching these objectives. There has been no alternative concept on sustainability and diversity, however. As the French Presidency document has shown, the belief is that polycentricity will also automatically serve these interests. Whether this assumption is justified from the ESDP discussions remains unclear. It must not be forgotten that, in the first instance, polycentricity is the answer to the competing interests of member states about cohesion and competitiveness.

Thus, polycentricity is a vague concept. In a European context, however, precisely because of their multi-interpretability, bridging concepts provide the basis for further cooperation. At least politically, polycentricity fulfils this function. Credit for this should go to the small group of ESDP planners who showed courage, stamina and creativity. They paved the way for further elaboration of polycentricity as a concept. From the perspective of understanding how polycentricity works, the evolving academic debate on causal and final relationships underlying the concept is welcome. From the perspective of influencing European policy making, it is also positive to see that within the ESDP process, follow-up actions are being taken and that the Second Cohesion Report incorporates the ESDP and polycentricity. With polycentricity as the subject of an academic debate, while forming the basis for further cooperation, the conclusion here is positive in that, just as its makers intended, the process continues.

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4 Visions on territorial cohesion

Introduction to Chapter 4

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This article is based on a paper presented at the AESOP conference in Grenoble in 2004. The paper in turn was based on a commissioned study on a possible implementation strategy for territorial cohesion, that we did in 2003 for the Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment together with Ad van Delft and Marie-Jose Zondag of Ecorys. Andreas Faludi, who at that time was still at Nijmegen University, had read the study report and strongly advised us to publish its main messages in English. The idea of developing a special issue on 'Territorial Cohesion: An Unidentified Political Objective' had already taken shape before the AESOP conference.

Within this book the article is relevant because it reflects on the institutional environment in which the European planning community wants to become active and highlights how general EU policy principles diverge from the community's planning principles. This chapter shows that the intentions and meaning of territorial cohesion were all but clear, which can partly be explained from the fact that the planning community as such had no say in the matter (see Chapter 2). However, the concept opened up a policy window or critical moment and urged the community to take action. To increase the community's 'transformative capacity' (a central concept in chapter 9), we propose starting a process of spatial visioning. But then, this vision should not aim to reach consensus, but rather agreement on a selection of issues on which spatial planning can have added value.

Characteristic of the discussion on territorial cohesion is that over time its potential implications have become wider and wider. Also, there seems to be no limit to the number of scales to which it can be applied. The aim of this paper is to show how the abstract idea of territorial cohesion could be rendered more concrete. For this purpose we use the notion of 'territorial capital'. We also emphasise the role of spatial visions, especially as regards political decision-making. However, for this to come true, future visions should be developed in a fundamentally different way from that in which the current generation of transnational spatial visions are being formulated.

Characteristic of the discussion on territorial cohesion since its insertion in the EC Treaty in 1997 is that its implications have become wider and wider. Also, there seems to be no limit to the number of scales to which it can be applied. However, while figuring prominently in the current debate it was barely mentioned in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)! As is often the case with new concepts, its meaning is unclear.

The aim of this paper is to show how the abstract idea of territorial cohesion could be rendered concrete. The first section attempts to demystify the debate on territorial cohesion. The next section puts forward the notion of 'territorial capital' to elucidate that of territorial cohesion. In our view spatial visions, which we discuss in the third section, are tools for developing the concepts of territorial cohesion and territorial capital and relating these to specific areas and regions. We round off with some concluding remarks.

4.1   The debate on territorial cohesion

Above we have treated 'territorial cohesion' as a kind of black box; instead of trying to define it we identify policy issues that are (or could be) addressed by it. Referring to the debate in certain countries and European institutions we focus on the meaning of territorial cohesion.

4.1.1   The debate in the member states

In a recent paper Faludi (2004) shows how territorial cohesion is being discussed in France and the Federal Republic of Germany. In France, notions of territorial cohesion are rooted in the tradition of *aménagement du territoire*. Faludi gives a suggestive picture of French planning doctrine being extrapolated to the European scale, as has happened in 1988 with the Structural Funds.

Faludi shows that the debate on territorial cohesion and spatial equity is more than a purely economic discourse. The French approach, regarded as a tradition in its own right in The EU Compendium of Planning Systems and Policies (CEC, 1997), borrows elements from the 'integrated approach' designed to coordinate policy with spatial effects that have specific, substantive objectives in mind. The French approach also promotes what is referred to as 'capacity building' at regional level. In substantive terms it addresses not only the harmonious allocation of economic activities but also sustainable development (Faludi, 2004). This is illustrated by the title of an Act passed in 1999, known as the Voynet Act, *Loi d'orientation pour l'aménagement et le développement durable du territoire*.

In Germany ideas on spatial policy, in particular what it implies at European level, are shifting. Faludi bases this conclusion on the views of two influential planning institutions in Germany, the *Akademie für Raumforschung und*

Landesplanung (ARL) and the *Beirat für Raumordnung*, an advisory body to the Federal Government. At the expert level German views are shifting towards the French interventionist interpretation of the role of government and of the EU. What could be called the 'core notion' of territorial cohesion, as laid down in the current EC Treaty (i.e. access to services of general economic interest) is also regarded as such in Germany. On top of this, traditional German scepticism about the Community's planning role is weakening (Faludi, 2004). Briefly, convergence is in the air, as Faludi puts it. This is significant, given that Germany and France (i.e. advisory bodies and experts in those countries) leave their mark on European spatial development policy.

In the Netherlands and the UK, too, there have been albeit more diffuse discussions on territorial cohesion. However, both countries have been influential and will hold the EU presidency in the second half of 2004 and 2005 respectively. It is important to note, therefore, that the UK government is a strong advocate of the principle of 'single-pot funding' – allowing regions to spend subsidies as they see fit with little Commission involvement (DTI *et al.*, 2003). Like the French view, this supports regional capacity building. The Dutch see territorial cohesion as a way of increasing coordination between EU sectoral policies and developing something like a European Territorial Strategy, which could play a role in coordinating spatial effects (and avoiding unwanted side effects) of sectoral policies. Also, such a strategy could form a framework and a rationale for further decision-making and contribute, for instance, to the Lisbon and Gothenburg process. Obviously these ideas are rooted in Dutch spatial planning, a prominent example of the comprehensive integrated approach (CEC, 1997). The ideas of the UK and the Netherlands are of particular interest since the five upcoming EU presidencies[1] have jointly agreed a political agenda 2004-2006 for the 'EU informal ministerial meetings on territorial cohesion', as the Dutch Presidency officially calls them on its website.[2]

4.1.2 The Treaty debate

In the European Convention the debate on territorial cohesion was mainly about Article I-3 of the Constitutional Treaty.[3] It came on the Convention agenda late, as is clear from the fact that it was not included in earlier draft versions of the Constitution. Amendments came from Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain, and the, at that time, prospective Mem-

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1 In order of appearance the upcoming EU Presidencies are: the Netherlands (2004), Luxembourg and the UK (2005) and in 2006 Austria and Finland.

2 See www.EU2004.nl (accessed September 2004). Note that under the Dutch Presidency the meeting is organised jointly with ministers responsible for urban policy.

ber States Bulgaria, Malta and Slovenia. Delegations from the European Parliament and observers from the Committee of the Regions and the Economic and Social Committee also pronounced themselves in favour.[4] With only nine out of 28 countries having submitted reactions, territorial cohesion seems to have attracted the attention of only a minority of Member States.

The various countries and EU institutions concerned clearly nourished certain expectations. Since most of the proposals referred at the same time to services of general interest, it seems fair to assume that these expectations were mainly about increasing the emphasis on equity in the territorial development of Europe. During the ESDP process, the countries involved (i.e. the then EU Member States) stressed that the overall spatial and economic structure of Europe was unequal, with a dominant centre in the north west of the continent. If this is indeed the reason for promoting territorial cohesion, this will undoubtedly affect decision making, especially as regards the Structural Funds.

Interestingly, the Member States mentioned above are evidently not scared – like in the ESDP process – of losing control over planning (Faludi and Waterhout, 2002). We have to emphasise, though, that territorial cohesion should not be used as a synonym for spatial planning policy.

4.1.3 Towards implementing territorial cohesion

It has now become clear that territorial cohesion will not be a distinct area of policy. Territorial cohesion, if taken seriously and on condition that it is given a broader interpretation than simply the provision of services of general economic interest, will feed into existing EU policies by adding a territorial dimension to them, thereby making them more effective and efficient. The bottom line is that a territorial view can help to better understand existing discontinuities and development gaps between regions. In this sense one could argue that territorial cohesion also carries an important governance element

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3 Only the Dutch have proposed adding territorial cohesion to Article I–16, but this was the result of a last minute action. Article I–16 brings together various policy domains under the heading of 'Areas of supporting, coordinating or complementary action'. The idea was that the Dutch would retain control over their spatial planning policy. Apparently they had different ideas on what territorial cohesion could mean. However, they are now happy with territorial cohesion under Article I-3.

4 Based on an analysis of all written amendments to various versions of the Draft Treaty of 18 July 2003 to be found on the website of the European Convention, http://european-convention.eu.int/ (accessed September 2004).

5 This is the report produced by a high-level study group invited by the Commission to review the entire system of EU economic policies and to propose a strategy for delivering faster growth 'together with stability and cohesion in the enlarged Union' according to this group's brief.

in it. After all its focus is on existing EU policies becoming smarter. Potentially beneficial for territorial cohesion are the recent debates in the wake of the so-called Sapir Report[5] (Sapir *et al.*, 2004) and the Third Cohesion Report (CEC, 2004). Both argue for a more diversified approach to regional policy and economic policy generally and have considerable impact on future regional policy.

In changing existing EU policies two avenues are open. The first is to develop a policy that uses the terms and techniques of standard 'generic' EU policies. In general EU policies are of a technocratic nature and designed in such a way that they are subject to quantitative measurement. If this avenue were to be taken, then the emphasis would be on operationalising territorial cohesion. We call this road 'learning to think technically'.

A second road is to develop a policy that aims at influencing the minds of EU policy makers by communicating certain views and ideas on the development of Europe so that these will be taken into account when reconsidering existing policies. Obviously, assessing such a policy requires other criteria than just quantitative indicators. We call this road 'learning to think spatially'. The following two sections will deal with both these avenues.

4.2 Learning to think technically: territorial capital and indicators

Currently various approaches are proposed in order to introduce a territorial dimension to EU policies through mechanical or technical processes. Among them we find Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA), or more recently ideas on integrating a territorial indicator into the so-called Integrated Impact Assessment (CEC, 2001). Members of the Spatial and Urban Development sub-committee (SUD) have already discussed TIA back in 2001 and concluded that its application very much depends on the priorities set by the authorities (SUD, 2002). Still, the idea has never totally disappeared (SUD Experts Working Group, 2003) and is being kept alive in a less technical manner in the ESPON programme 2000–2006, to be discussed below. Another idea, less discussed but nevertheless appearing in the writings of a group of SUD members meeting informally (SUD Experts Working Group, 2003), is the concept of 'territorial capital' as introduced by the OECD (2001).

4.2.1 Territorial capital

Based on authors such as Porter (2000) and Camagni (who wrote a chapter in the report itself), the OECD (2001) argues in its report Territorial Outlook 2001 that each region has its own specific 'territorial capital' – path-dependent capital, be it social, human or physical. (See also the new model of region-

al development discussed by Polverari & Bachtler, 2005.) This makes investments in one region more effective than in another. Factors that play a part are, for example, geographical location, the size of the region, climate, natural resources, quality of life and economies of scale – all factors that can reduce 'transaction costs' (access to knowledge, etc.). Other factors relate to local and regional traditions and customs, the quality of governance, including issues like mutual trust and informal rules that enable economic actors to work together under conditions of uncertainty. Finally, there are more intangible factors, resulting from a combination of institutions, rules, practices, producers, researchers and policy makers, which facilitate creativity and innovation – a condition often referred to as 'quality of the milieu'.

Territorial capital can be utilised best at regional and local level, claims the OECD. Interpreted in this way, it relates to what is sometimes referred to as 'endogenous potential', i.e. specific qualities of regions. The elements that make up a region's territorial capital comprise (a) its structural characteristics and (b) the characteristics associated with its spatial position. 'Structure' means the 'givens' present in the region; 'position' refers to the region's characteristics in a broader context. Geographical position is part of this and refers to access to the outside world and so on. It is often these decidedly spatial characteristics that feature in debates on territorial cohesion, as if these were aspects of territorial capital that play a decisive role in social and economic development. However, there is not much point in focusing on just one or a handful of aspects of a region's territorial capital.

Discussing territorial cohesion in terms of territorial capital is one way of enriching the current debate on social and economic cohesion by bringing in new criteria. This can create a new outlook on regional differences currently measured by a single yardstick – how a region diverges from the average income per head and the employment rate in the EU. It should be noted though that the concept of territorial capital is itself yet another black box. As the Dutch know from their experience, operationalising concepts of 'spatial quality' (NSPA, 2001) can be laborious, giving rise to confusion and leading to discussions accessible only to an inner circle of professionals. This in itself forms grounds for looking in other directions – it should be possible to discuss sensitive matters at a political level.

4.2.2 ESPON: towards territorial indicators

Laborious or not, under the INTERREG IIIB regulation, DG Regio and the Member States have created a research programme, an objective of which is precisely to develop a technical framework through which to understand and monitor territorial development in the EU (in terms discussed above to understand territorial capital). This is the European Spatial Planning Observation Network, in short ESPON (Gestel & Faludi, 2005).[6] Policy makers, that is, mem-

bers of the SUD and representatives of Member States and the Commission who manage the programme, meet twice a year with the researchers involved at so-called ESPON seminars.[7] It is this link between researchers and policy makers that makes ESPON special. Outcomes of projects must be designed in such a way that they can feed into discussions on EU policies. ESPON is used as a tool, by invoking 'hard' evidence, to convince politicians of the importance of the territorial dimension of sectoral policies. Based on earlier experience these policy makers have a good idea of what evidence is needed. ESPON should result in databases, quantifiable territorial indicators, evaluation models to assess the relationship between EU policies and territorial development and, last but not least, techniques for making sound and reliable maps. Unsurprisingly, within the programme there is a continuous search for balance between, on the one hand, what researchers are able to achieve within the constraints of limited budgets and, on the other hand, the sometimes overambitious objectives of policy makers and the European Commission.

At the time of writing, the first projects of the ESPON programme are about to be completed. The results are impressive and seem to lead to a truly new and European-wide approach to assessing territorial developments (ESPON, 2004; DG Regio, 2004). However, as might be expected, this was not easy. As participants in two projects, the authors have witnessed the difficulties which researchers faced and the pressure that was put on them by the managing authority. This even went as far as policy makers trying to influence the selection of indicators for mapping the so-called 'Typology of Functional Urban Areas' (ESPON, 2004, 20; DG Regio, 2004, 19). More or less the same set of indicators goes for projects that focused on assessing the territorial impacts of EU policies such as the Structural Funds, Research and Development, Transport and Environmental policies. The outcomes certainly represent a step in the right direction. A follow-up programme of ESPON, if indeed there will be a follow up, promises further benefits.

However, whether territorial trends and relationships and more in particular regional performance can ever be fully understood by means of indicators alone remains a moot question. Thus, ESPON may in the end provide only a partial picture. Probably the OECD sensed something similar regarding the concept of territorial capital, which by the way it did not elaborate

6 See also www.espon.eu.

7 Both authors have taken part in two ESPON projects – project 1.1.1 about polycentric development and project 1.1.2 about urban-rural relationships. One of them was already involved in its forerunner (SPESP). Both have visited ESPON seminars in 2002, 2003 and 2004 in Bendorf (Luxembourg), Crete and Lillehammer respectively. Currently they are involved in three new projects which have just been started – project 2.3.1 on the application and effects of the ESDP in Member States, project 2.3.2 about urban governance from EU to local level and project 3.3 about a territorial dimension of the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies.

upon. Anyway, according to the OECD, territorial capital involves intangible factors not subject to quantification. Moreover, although a technical approach may be helpful to prove to politicians the importance of territorial elements, it remains doubtful whether in the end political choices can or will be based on such evidence. It is here that visioning seems to offer better opportunities.

4.3 Learning to think spatially: the importance of spatial visioning

4.3.1 Territoriality

In the previous section we have presented approaches delivering a classic, quantitative operationalisation of territorial cohesion. In this section we discuss a more qualitative instrument. Territorial cohesion can be regarded as a plea for assigning a more important place to territoriality in all types of policy. However, what does 'territoriality' mean? Here it makes sense to think in terms of spatial structure, sometimes referred to as 'structural thinking' (Vermeersch, 1994). The challenge here is to identify material elements that structure the area in question (Vermeersch, 1994: 137). These are not confined by the boundaries of the 'plan area'. Many territorial relations extend beyond them. 'Structural thinking' is above all selective, aiming to identify essential forms of territorial integration, including the social agents behind particular functions that have an impact on the spatial structure of an area (De Vries, 2002: 189).

When it comes to governance it is important to note that analysing the structure of an area is not just a matter for experts or an inner circle of administrators, politicians and civil servants. Generating images of spatial structures is an example of what is sometimes referred to as 'collective learning', a socialised form of knowledge development and dissemination between as many stakeholders as possible. Reaching agreement on the spatial structure of an area involves creating a mental frame that enables stakeholders to coordinate their policy instruments and investments. Developing a strategic framework – as we may term an agreement on spatial structure – is thus a preliminary investment, as it was, in operational decision-making.

We can juxtapose thinking in terms of spatial structure with what could be called the 'generic approach' based on the idea that a particular set of policy tools needs to be based on uniform principles being applied throughout the area in question. Working with generic policies and policy instruments is the dominant EU approach, particularly in Objective 1 regions that receive the lion's share of funding. Where European regional policy applies is thus not based on what the spatial structure of a country, region or transnational area looks like, but rather on 'objective' criteria like gross domestic product (GDP) per capita.

There is an important reason for promoting European and transnational visioning. In our view the elaboration of territorial cohesion makes it necessary to attend to the spatial structure and the qualities of areas in order to prioritise, in terms of policy and policy instruments, spaces and places. We could describe this as the essence of European and transnational visioning. While thinking in terms of spatial structure is not a sinecure, be it intellectually or politically, spatial visions can play an important role in policy making by bringing to the fore perceptions of existing spatial structures and assessments of levels of territorial cohesion which can be invoked as the basis of policies. At the 'transnational' and European level, several spatial visions have seen the light of day in recent years. What can we learn from these visions and the processes that generated them?

4.3.2 Experiences with spatial visioning

Apart from the ESDP we are talking about three visions, all dating from 1999-2000. First, there is the VISION PLANET project, which relates to CADSES, the Central European, Adriatic, Danubian and South Eastern European Space. Second is NorVision, the spatial vision for the North Sea Region. Third, there is the Spatial Vision for the North Western Metropolitan Area (NWMA).[8] All these visions show that spatial visioning has been among the most controversial elements in the process. Summarising the conclusions of recent studies on this subject (Zonneveld, 2003; Zonneveld & Waterhout, 2004; Zonneveld, 2005; Jensen & Richardson, 2004), it seems clear that none of the visions, not even the ESDP, invokes marked spatial concepts or images of the desired spatial structure. With the exception of the NWMA Spatial Vision, giving an image of the desired spatial structure is almost equated with making a comprehensive masterplan. It is for this reason that spatial visioning has been rejected, implicitly or explicitly (in VISION PLANET and NorVision respectively). Instead of developing inspiring territorial images, the authors have opted for formulating dozens of policy objectives and options – over a hundred in some cases – resulting in wordy documents devoid of any real choices.

The largely verbal nature of the current generation of European visions is due partly to the authors' desire to tackle urgent problems (Nadin, 2000a), but at the same time we note that each 'spatial vision group', as they were called – comprising professionals with a background in administration or consultancy – aspired to formulate principles that could or should be valid for the long term. They did not think it necessary to set out their ideas in visual terms: this was done in the ESDP, but there the image went no further than picto-

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8 The VASAB, 'Visions and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010', passed in 1994, dates from before the INTER-REG IIC initiative, although INTERREG IIC did contribute to it with an action programme.

grams representing generic policy principles and concepts. Evidently, visual representation of generic principles is not particularly controversial, but developing area-based spatial concepts – concepts that refer to concrete areas and their existing or intended characteristics – often is.

It is clear, then, that visualising spatial concepts and maps that denote qualities specific to an area – be they perceptions of the present or projections of possible futures – is going to meet with opposition and will not come to fruition. However, in the case of areas (in particularly transnational ones) characterised by a high degree of spatial diversity, generic policy options and concepts alone will not be enough. Nadin's point is relevant here, "… 'visioning' exercises will need to be more explicit in both recognising the contradictions and making difficult choices, if the outputs are to be meaningful" (Nadin, 2000b: 37). Following Doucet we can conclude that there is a need for territorially differentiated goals when setting thematic priorities. In his view maps are essential for progress (Doucet, 2002: 76). Seen in this way, if we are to have a debate on European territorial development with a view to increasing territorial cohesion, learning to think in spatial and structural terms is essential.

4.3.3   Different sorts of spatial visions

Why is it so difficult to produce territorial images? Looking at the various spatial visions, it is obvious that perceptions of the purpose of transnational spatial visions and what territorial policy means differ. De Vries (2002; 2004) makes an important distinction between planning as communication and planning as programming.

If planning is regarded as communication, the main function of spatial plans is to provide interpretative frameworks of spatial structure or spatial development, and the intended effect of plans is to change the actor's frame of mind. One of the vital changes relates to how actors position themselves and the area they 'stand for' in space. At the supranational level, though, this is no simple task:

> [t]he capacity to conceptualise or think about one's location or situation within the spatial structure of Europe as a whole is a skill which often needs to be developed. Spatial positioning is the term [...] for this skill (Williams, 1996: 97).

It is fair to say, then, that spatial concepts and maps play a vital role in spatial positioning and thus in conceiving planning as communication. Indeed, spatial planning as communication simply cannot do without them. Unfortunately, most transnational visions (including the ESDP) do not serve this purpose well.

Seen as programming, planning relates to the aspiration to implement spa-

tial plans. For this to happen, tools must be made available. However, De Vries (2002) notes that literature on government policy increasingly stresses the limitations of planners when it comes to influencing the decisions of other actors. This is even more true at the transnational level where, apart from the operational programmes of INTERREG, there is no clear-cut policy arena. So in our view efforts to start new spatial-vision processes at the transnational level should give priority to the dimension of communication.

4.3.4 The future of visioning

Although the practice of spatial visioning at the EU (Faludi, 2003) and transnational level has come to a standstill, we now see indications for a new round of experimentation. Arguably, with the current INTERREG IIIB programmes focusing particularly on implementation and concrete action (i.e. planning as programming), there seems little to be hopeful about. As the only one, the programme for northwest Europe explicitly states that a new cycle of visioning should be undertaken. At the moment of writing, the NWE Joint Technical Secretariat has issued a call for several 'spatial vision studies' which should help to pursue spatial visioning.

   At the EU level the future looks more promising. As indicated, ESPON projects will generate many maps contributing to discussions on Europe's territorial structure. More promising even is the agreement, mentioned above, on the political agenda 2004-2006 for the upcoming EU Presidencies where reference is made to a so-called 'Strategic Policy Framework'. Although this framework will not be an 'ESDP 2', it will build on ESPON and try to elaborate on territorial in relation to economic and social cohesion policies and the Lisbon/Gothenburg process. Moreover, and this is of particular interest with respect to visioning, the framework may develop ideas on what is called 'European territorial structure'. In this respect it is also noteworthy that the authors of this paper have been asked by the Dutch Ministry to develop a 'realisation strategy' for transnational visioning (Zonneveld & Waterhout, 2004). Elaborating on this study is beyond the scope of this paper, but this goes to show that the Dutch have renewed their interest in visioning at the transnational and EU level.

4.4 Concluding remarks

In this paper we have set out two trajectories for rendering the notion of territorial cohesion more concrete. We have been discussing the classic road to policy development where standardised techniques and firm quantitative indicators play an important role. We conclude that, if spatial planners learn to master these technical tools and bend and shape them to cover territorial is-

sues – as is currently taking place in the context of ESPON – then they can play an important role in the discussion of territorial cohesion. However, a quantitative approach will only be useful in understanding the relevance of a territorial dimension, but not in making political decisions, so this role will remain limited. To influence political decisions, coalition building is needed, which may be achieved by engaging in spatial visioning processes that, other than the current transnational visions, prioritise the communication function. Alongside the quantitative approach, this more qualitative approach may contribute to specifying territorial cohesion. Contrary to previous visioning processes, the new practice should be aimed at envisioning spatial structures and organising collective learning processes in which spatial planners act mainly as facilitators rather than presenting themselves as an omniscient and inaccessible clique.

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5 Territorial cohesion: The underlying discourses

Introduction to Chapter 5

Chapter 5 has been published as:
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The second Lincoln seminar took place between 11-13 July 2005 in Vienna and concerned Territorial Cohesion and the European Model of Society. Here I presented a paper on territorial cohesion and the underlying discourses, which figures in this thesis as chapter 5. In 2007 I took part in the third of these seminars organised on 3 and 4 May in Luxembourg. This makes me a privileged person, as I am the only one, together with Andreas and Armando Carbonell, the chairman of the Lincoln Institute's department of planning and urban form, who has attended all three seminars up to date.
Chapter 5 elaborates further on the background of territorial cohesion and analyses how the European planning community is divided into several discourse coalitions relating to different European models of society. In so doing this chapter reflects on how the community acts an agent in the wider structure of the EU and how more deeply embedded discourses influence the planning community.

Note: For the purposes of this book the US-English spelling has been adapted to UK-English spelling.

Through the recent efforts of the European Commission and the member states of the European Union (EU), the concept of territorial cohesion is taking shape (for efforts of the Commission, see: DG Regio and DG Employment, 2005; for those of the member states, see: Faludi & Waterhout, 2005; Ministers for Spatial Development and European Commission, 2005). Nevertheless, its meaning has not yet crystallised (Faludi, 2005; Zonneveld & Waterhout, 2005). Currently, it is even uncertain whether territorial cohesion policy will come about anyway. Now that the French and the Dutch have said "*non*" and "*nee*" to the constitutional treaty, its institutional basis seems shaky. At the same time, the concept of territorial cohesion is undergoing various interpretations. This chapter seeks to identify these interpretations and relate them to various European models of society.

Territorial cohesion has been closely linked to the concept of services of general interest,[1] a link that also is made in Article 16 of the Treaty of Amsterdam and the Treaty of Nice, currently the only formal basis for EU territorial cohesion policy. The field of European spatial planning is concerning itself with territorial cohesion as well. Whereas European spatial planning is a game in the margins of formal EU policies played by a small number of officials from the Commission and the member states, as well as some modestly concerned ministers responsible for spatial planning, services of general interest have been the topic of speeches given by former presidents of the European Commission such as Jacques Delors and recently Romano Prodi (2002, 2003). There is another difference as well. European spatial planners hope to be taken seriously in Europe by being able to frame their ideas in terms of territorial cohesion, but the provision of services of general interest is a political aim in its own right and will in fact, according to numerous Commission papers, lead to territorial cohesion.

Against this institutional backdrop, this chapter identifies four storylines underlying territorial cohesion that, between them, might be considered the seedbed for territorial cohesion policy. These storylines are (1) 'Europe in Balance'; (2) 'Coherent European Policy'; (3) 'Competitive Europe'; and (4) 'Green and Clean Europe.' The relevance of the storylines is explained in the brief introduction to discourse analysis theory that follows. As will become clear in the conclusions to this chapter, the current views on territorial cohesion only address a fraction of these storylines, which, in turn, are grounded in different European models of society.

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1 This chapter does not distinguish between services of general interest and services of general economic interest. The latter can be found in Article 16 of the Treaty of Amsterdam. However, generally policy makers speak of services of general interest, without specifying whether they are talking about market or nonmarket services or both (see also CEC, 2004b).

5.1 A discourse analytical approach to territorial cohesion

Storylines are part of discourse analysis theory as invoked by Hajer. He defines a discourse as "an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorisations that are produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities and which permeates regional, national and supranational policy making circuits" (Hajer, 1995; 44). Discourses are therefore more than just a debate or discussion. Seen from a social constructivist viewpoint, they form an institutionalised reality. Without engaging in an extensive literature review, this section briefly describes discourse analysis theory with a view toward the function of storylines in this particular chapter and their meaning for territorial cohesion.

Like those of many other social scientists, Hajer's interpretation of discourse is based on the work of Foucault. Foucault focuses on the way discourses are produced through institutionalised practices. These practices, in turn, influence people's actions and in doing so produce political preferences. With this approach, which is based on laying bare certain linguistic practices or conventions through rhetorical analysis, Foucault fundamentally challenges mainstream political theory, because traditionally political scientists have not focused on institutionalised practices, but instead on institutions, individual stakeholders, and the articulated stakeholder preferences (Peters, 2003).

According to Hajer, a problem with Foucault's radically different route is that in his abstract notion of discourse, based as it is on primary linguistic analysis, the role of actors remains ambivalent. In Foucault's way of seeing things, it is difficult to understand how discourses develop and change. After all, although they are influenced by discourses, individual actors always have the option of leaving routines and developing new ones. Inevitably, this flexibility affects discourse, which, as defined by Hajer, is about producing and reproducing certain practices.

To make Foucault's theory more applicable to the study of concrete political events, Hajer introduces the concepts of storylines and discourse coalitions. He calls them "middle range concepts" that fill the gap between Foucault's abstract work and concrete political events. In doing so, Hajer reintroduces the role of agency into discourse analysis, which is necessary to understand how particular discourses emerge, develop, and change. Applied to territorial cohesion, discourse analysis, so conceived, may help one understand how this policy is being shaped and why.

But doing so requires identifying so-called discourse coalitions. Discourse coalitions are "a variety of actors that do not necessarily meet but through their utterances reinforce a particular way of talking that is reproduced via an identifiable set of storylines and discursive practices in a given policy domain" (Hajer, 2000: 139). In this chapter, "the given policy domain" is that of territo-

rial cohesion (constituting services of general interest and European spatial planning), and it is in this domain that discursive production takes place.

The key to identifying discourse coalitions for territorial cohesion is storylines and metaphors. Hajer defines storylines "as (crisp) generative statements that bring together previously unrelated elements of discourse and thus allow for new understandings and create new meanings... The importance of storylines for coalition formation is in their essentially figurative or metaphorical nature which allows for a diversity of interpretations. This is why they help constitute a discourse coalition consisting of a variety of actors" (Hajer, 2000: 140).

The main reason for the emergence of discourse coalitions is that the storyline binding them together just "sounds right". Actors do not have to share the same belief systems or cognitive understanding; storylines bridge different discourses and tie the actors together. Hajer argues that "not shared belief systems but multi-interpretable storylines are the glue that hold together the coalitions behind transnational policy discourses" (Hajer, 2000: 140).

Hajer's theories closely resemble other communicative theories. An example is that of the bridging or hegemonic concepts devised by Kohler-Koch (1999; see also Héritier, 1999), which have been applied to analysing the concept of polycentric development (Waterhout, 2002). Indeed, polycentric development, too, is a perfect example of a storyline gathering a variety of actors behind it, uniting those in favour of cohesion and of competitiveness. But, as described later in this chapter, polycentricity has lost some of its discursive power and currently serves just the interests of actors supporting balanced development of the EU territory.

Another well-known theory has been put forward by Throgmorton (1992), who argues that planning is mainly about "persuasive storytelling". The concepts developed by Hajer provide analysts with the tools they need to discover these "persuasive stories" and link them to a set of actors.

The value of identifying storylines and discourse coalitions for analysing an emerging policy field such as territorial cohesion is easy to understand. The future of a policy field that lacks a legal basis (and thus norms and standards) and therefore is not pursued by powerful actors depends on the outcome of communicative competition between its potential stakeholders.

5.2 Storylines feeding into Territorial Cohesion

This section discusses the four storylines – 'Europe in Balance', 'Coherent European Policy', 'Competitive Europe', and 'Green and Clean Europe' – that between them form the seedbed for the current discussions on territorial cohesion. As will become clear, actors may invoke more than one story-line. There is nothing strange about this. The crucial question is, in the end, to

which storyline will they give priority, and will it block or open up opportunities for forming coalitions in support of a consensus around a combination of storylines? With territorial cohesion policy still in the making, this consensus has yet to crystallise. Based on the storylines and the way they develop, it seems possible, however, to identify beforehand some elements that eventually will have to be included in the final policy package. This is the subject of the two concluding sections.

5.2.1 Europe in Balance

The storyline 'Europe in Balance' combines the thinking of planners who participated in the process of developing the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) with that of lobbyists for services of general interest. Their common objective for territorial cohesion is to level out regional disparities. The storyline is thus related to the traditional objective of the EU, which is to establish economic and social cohesion, and thus to the distribution of EU Structural Funds to which the ESDP tries to add a territorial development rationale.

From the planners' perspective
Reducing regional disparities was a crucial issue during the ESDP process (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002). Whereas member states in northwest Europe were often stressing the importance of core regions for Europe's competitiveness, member states in southern Europe, led by Spain, were emphasising the need to reduce disparities. They argued that a more balanced Europe would eventually improve Europe's competitive position. A solution was found by invoking the politically acceptable concept of polycentric development, which serves both cohesion and competitiveness objectives (Waterhout, 2002). Polycentric development on the EU scale translated into the development of several global economic integration zones next to the existing core area in the northwest (London-Paris-Milan-Munich-Hamburg) known as the pentagon of Europe (CEC, 1999). In doing so, it stressed the importance of both the core areas as well as the need for a better balance within Europe.

   The concept of polycentric development turned out to be a real winner and was picked up in many policy documents at the European as well as at the member state and subnational levels, as well as in Interreg and the European Spatial Planning Observation Network, or ESPON (Zonneveld, Meijers & Waterhout, 2005). Yet polycentric development is considered a vague political goal and is difficult to operationalise (Davoudi, 2003; Peters, 2003; Shaw & Sykes, 2004; Waterhout, Zonneveld & Meijers, 2005). Also, it seems to be explained increasingly in terms of cohesion, equity, and spatial justice (Baudelle & Peyrony, 2005) rather than in terms of competitiveness (CEC, 2001d; DG Regio & DG Employment, 2005).

Interestingly, the concept was virtually absent from the two recent discussion papers tabled at the informal meetings of ministers at Rotterdam in 2004 and Luxembourg in 2005 (MINVROM, 2004; Ministers for Spatial Development and European Commission, 2005).[2]

Today, polycentric development has been replaced by the new and equally vague concept of territorial capital (described later in this chapter). So for the moment, the 'Europe in Balance' storyline, although never totally absent, seems to have lost some ground in the European spatial planning debate.

European spatial planners are not the only ones with a say in the matter, however. Organisations that have always been closely involved in traditional cohesion policy are expressing strong political support for the 'Europe in Balance' storyline (a development discussed later in this section), and those organisations are lobbying for a policy safeguarding the provision of services of general interest throughout Europe.

Services of general interest

After services of general interest and territorial cohesion were introduced in Article 16 of the Amsterdam Treaty, a few years passed before the debate about implementing this article took shape. Documents fuelling this debate were prepared by the secretariat-general of the European Commission in charge of this dossier. In general, the impression is that the provision of these services will automatically result in more territorial cohesion (see, for example, CEC, 2001a, 2001c and 2004b; European Parliament, 2003; Commission Staff, 2004; CoR, 2005; EcoSoc, 2005). The authors of the reports discussing services of general interest regard territorial cohesion as an abstract concept, the meaning of which is barely explained. A typical expression in the European Commission's white paper is as follows: "In the Union, services of general interest remain essential for ensuring social and territorial cohesion and for the competitiveness of the European economy" (CEC, 2004b: 4).

The wish to guarantee services of general interest refers to the difficulties of living in the outermost, less accessible regions where the provision of services of general interest cannot be guaranteed through the market. Among such services, the European Commission lists the following: electronic communications, postal services, electricity, gas, water, transport and broadcasting (CEC, 2004b). Because this kind of policy is particularly relevant for the more peripheral, more sparsely populated, and less accessible regions, it is no wonder that since the mid-1990s the strongest lobbying was conducted by associations such as the Assembly of European Regions (AER), the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR), and the Committee of

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2 To be more exact, where polycentric development is mentioned it is related only to the regional or national level, not to the European territory or to the political objective of balancing Europe.

the Regions (CoR), all of which, according to Faludi (2004, drawing on Husson, 2002), have been used by French players to voice their concerns (for a broader account of the French influence, see Tatzberger, 2003). At the European Convention, convened to draft the constitutional treaty, the following parties also supported the inclusion of services of general interest (often in combination with territorial cohesion) in the constitutional treaty: Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain, as well as Bulgaria and Romania, which are slated to join the EU in 2007. Ten delegates to the European Convention from the European Parliament handed in a joint proposal on general-interest services, while members representing the U.K., Germany, and Austria submitted separate proposals. Some observers of the process – the Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), and the European Social Partners – also proposed including territorial cohesion in the constitutional treaty under Article I-3.

   As indicated by Faludi (2004) referring to Guigou (2001; see also Rifkin, 2004), this movement toward territorial cohesion is based on the assumption that Europeans are less nomadic than Americans and more strongly attached to the region in which they were born. Because of different languages, different cultural traditions, and different identities, it is also less easy for the average European to move. Thus, it would follow that, complementary to the growing liberalisation of the EU economy and according to certain European norms and values, some kind of policy should be in place to safeguard quality of life where the market cannot provide it. The idea is that, based on European values stressing diversity, people should not be negatively affected in their development possibilities because of where they happened to be born. This point was emphasised by the European Parliament in a resolution on territorial cohesion prepared by the French rapporteur Ambroise Guellec. The resolution argued that territorial cohesion should be "based on the principle of equity between citizens, wherever they live in the Union [and] calls, therefore, for regional development to be founded on programmes which guarantee equality of treatment between the EU's territories, while preserving their diversity, which notably implies appropriate accessibility of services of general interest (SGI) and services of general economic interest (SGEI)" (European Parliament, 2005: 2). All these developments provide a clear agenda for territorial cohesion policy, albeit a narrow one confined strictly to the least accessible regions and in which territorial concerns as such do not play much of a role. Such an agenda nevertheless clearly aims to keep Europe in balance.

Europe in balance interpreted in territorial terms: Polycentric development
A broader definition of territorial cohesion that would be relevant to a wider range of European regions is supported by those organisations that always have been closely involved in cohesion policy. Based on several amendments proposed at the European Convention, it is clear that a wide range of actors

would like territorial cohesion to contribute to a more cohesive and balanced European territory. For example, Portuguese members of the European Convention specifically focused on the reduction of regional disparities as a rationale for territorial cohesion policy. Their proposal reads: "To promote economic, social and territorial cohesion through policies aiming at reducing inequalities between states and regions" (European Convention, 2003, emphasis in original). The Committee of the Regions, too, views territorial cohesion as a means of reducing disparities. The CoR, one of the most active players in the field of territorial cohesion, has set up a special Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy to finance studies on the subject (Study Group for European Policies, 2002). In an opinion presented to the European Convention, the CoR asserted that "territorial cohesion must be understood as an objective in reducing disparities in development between European regions, to be achieved by reorganising Community territory in such a way as to enable polycentric, harmonious, balanced and sustainable development" (CoR, 2003: 4).

Within this view, polycentric development is still being advocated. In making this recommendation, the committee insisted that "polycentric development is impossible without adopting a genuine spatial blueprint" (CoR, 2003: 6). This statement must have been music to the ears of those spatial planners convinced that territorial cohesion policy cannot do without a spatial strategy – but not necessarily a blueprint! Considering the current state of affairs, however, this message has never come through (a fact that is touched upon in the section on the 'Coherent European Policy' storyline).

Another player with a similar message is the European Parliament. By means of the Schroedter Report (named after the *rapporteur*, Elisabeth Schroedter) adopted on 6 November 2002, the European Parliament stressed "the need to promote territorial cohesion in Europe so as to prevent the population, economic activities, employment and investments from being concentrated in the wealthier zones of the European Union" (European Parliament, 2002: 8). The European Parliament reiterates this point in two more recent reports by rapporteur Konstantinos Hatzidakis and, as already noted, by Guellec (European Parliament, 2004: 2005), both arguing explicitly for polycentric development. Guellec emphasises that, among other objectives of territorial cohesion, the "initial priority should be given to combating distortions between centre and periphery and disparities at sub-national level, so as to strengthen cohesion" (European Parliament, 2005: 2).

Thus, the European Parliament, like the Committee of the Regions, relates polycentric development first and foremost with a balanced and cohesive Europe (instead of a competitive Europe, to which polycentric development used to be related, too [Waterhout, 2002]). Another issue that has stirred unease in the Committee of the Regions and the European Parliament (a judgment that from the beginning of the ESDP process has underlain the efforts of European spatial planners) is the limited effectiveness of cohesion policy.

This unease has become even stronger since publication of the Sapir Report, which, for the sake of stimulating economic growth, advises tossing out the traditional cohesion policy altogether (Sapir *et al.*, 2004). The European Parliament has repeatedly called for account to be taken not only of "the per capita GDP criterion but also [of] other indicators reflecting regional sensitivities and the development difficulties" (European Parliament, 2002: 7; see also European Parliament, 2004: 2005). This call by Parliament opens the door for a territorial cohesion policy that is based on more sophisticated indicators – for example, those now being developed within the ESPON program.

Clearly, in the view of the European Parliament the concept of territorial cohesion in the constitutional treaty legitimises a revision of cohesion policy and the development in that context of a completely new kind of policy for the territorial development of the EU territory. The next section further explores the issue of policy delivery.

5.2.2 Coherent European policy

Policy coherence not only makes cohesion policy more effective, but also stands on its own as an issue related to EU sector policies with territorial impacts. The problem with these policies is that, from a spatial perspective, they are not coherent. The focus in this storyline, "Coherent European Policy," is on achieving horizontal coherence – a focus that comes through loud and clear in the documents tabled at the Rotterdam and Luxembourg ministerial meetings (MINVROM, 2004; Ministers for Spatial Development and European Commission, 2005).

For a long time, horizontal coordination has been a rationale for working on the ESDP. In the minds of the policy makers concerned, the fact that EU sector policies cause unintended territorial impacts was enough of a reason, even in the absence of a formal EU competency, to formulate some sort of spatial framework to coordinate and integrate these policies. In reality, however, there was no chance of influencing EU policy within the highly fragmented structure of the directorates-general of the European Commission (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002).

At this point, it is important to explain that in the early 1990s not all member states insisted on horizontal coordination. It was mainly those whose planning systems had been ranked by the EU compendium of spatial planning systems under the so-called comprehensive integrated approach that did so (CEC, 1997a). The main characteristic of this approach is intersectoral coordination among policies through a spatial planning framework and additional institutional support systems, but also vertical coordination among administrative levels.

Only a few EU member states actually share this tradition. Famous examples are Denmark and the Netherlands, but the German and Flemish sys-

tems fit into this category as well. The French system of *aménagement du terri-toire*, which used to be identified with a different regional economic approach, recently began to move in this direction (Faludi, 2004). Of the new member states, Slovenia is known to take a similar approach to planning. However, inspired by the ESDP and the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent (CEMAT, 2000), many countries (old and new member states) now draft spatial planning frameworks, a key element of the comprehensive integrated approach (see Zonneveld, Meijers & Waterhout, 2005). Furthermore, it is expected that, because of the intensification of EU policies, each country will experience situations in which, seen from a spatial perspective, EU policies are in conflict with each other, not to mention with domestic spatial policy objectives (see Robert *et al.*, 2001; Ravesteyn & Evers, 2004).

However, without a formal competency, and because of the EU's current sectoral organisation, planners find it almost impossible to gain influence, and so their strategy is to gather evidence that demonstrates the malfunctioning of EU policies from a territorial perspective. For example, the Directorate General for Regional Policy (DG Regio) financed a study to demonstrate the conflicting spatial impacts of EU sector policies. The report by Robert *et al.*, (2001) carried the appropriate title Spatial Impacts of Community Policies and the Costs of Non-coordination. The study is well known among planners, but less so with sectoral policy makers at EU and national levels.

Also, as part of the consultation round of the first official draft of the ESDP in 1998, DG Regio organised an interservice consultation within the Commission administration (CEC, 1997b). The exercise has been described as positive and stimulating (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002), but because of the lack of spatial concern in current EU policies it has not led to further results. Persistence is the only option left, and currently member states and DG Regio are supporting research under ESPON that is assessing the territorial impacts of certain EU sector policies. Meanwhile, spurred by alarming headlines in newspapers, the Netherlands Institute of Spatial Research has also carried out a study of the impact of EU policies called Unseen Europe (Ravesteyn & Evers, 2004). Among the policies with a spatial impact are the EU's regional policy, the common agricultural policy, the Trans-European Network for Transport (TEN-T) policy, the environmental directives such as the habitat and birds directives and recently the air quality directive, and the water framework directive. Some EU policies, such as the policy on competition and state aid, affect the spatial planning systems of countries.

Territorial cohesion policy that addresses the issue of enhanced policy coordination seems to be quite a distant prospect; it simply does not fit the administrative culture of the European Commission. It is probably because European spatial planners sense this situation that the document "Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union" includes the somewhat mys-

terious statement that "spatial development is more than territorial cohesion" (Ministers for Spatial Development and European Commission, 2005: 5). Apparently, policy coherence is deemed too large an issue for territorial cohesion.

Although the issue of policy coherence is typically a theme for spatial planners, other parties share their concerns. The European Commission, in its white paper on European governance drafted by the Secretariat-General, states that "the territorial impact of EU policies in areas such as transport, energy or environment should be addressed. These policies should form part of a coherent whole as stated in the EU's second cohesion report; there is a need to avoid a logic which is too sector specific. In the same way, decisions taken at the regional and local levels should be coherent with a broader set of principles that would underpin more sustainable and balanced territorial development within the Union" (CEC, 2001b: 13).

Unfortunately, the Commission has refrained from pursuing this objective. In a 2003 report on the consultations on the white paper, there is almost nothing related to this aspect of governance. The only instruments being mentioned in relation to coordinating the territorial impacts of EU policies are tripartite contracts and agreements and so-called territorial impact assessments (CEC, 2003), which obviously reduces the scope for integrated territorial cohesion policy. Nevertheless, with the recent support of the European Parliament and Committee of the Regions for the use of spatial frameworks, there might still be some political scope in territorial cohesion policy so that a storyline such as 'Coherent European Policy' would survive.

5.2.3 Competitive Europe

The storyline 'Competitive Europe' is directed at the global competitiveness of Europe as a whole, as well as at the competitiveness of individual regions. It is aiming for a well-structured territory and to develop Europe's territory in all its diversity, but in contrast to 'Europe in Balance' redistribution is not an issue, so that the ball is in the court of the regions themselves. The focus is not exclusively on cities as motors of the economy, but rather on regions and their unique territorial capital. Although initially the issue of competitiveness was the concern of only some member states involved in the ESDP process, recently support for this storyline has increased, fuelled by the Lisbon Agenda and the relatively weak performance of cohesion policy, as emphasised by the Sapir Report.

The ESDP process: Introducing competitiveness and potential
During the ESDP process, EU member states in northwest Europe brought attention to the need to keep economic core regions in good shape, stressing their importance for Europe's competitiveness. A country strongly associated

with this idea is the Netherlands. In 1991 it used its EU presidency to intro-
duce the concept of urban networks in order to combine Dutch ideas with the
high interest expressed at earlier meetings in lagging regions. As Zonneveld
(2000) describes, transposing domestic ideas onto a European scale, the Dutch
designed a new map of the EU in which all major European cities were repre-
sented as part of one and the same urban network covering the whole terri-
tory (Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning and the Environment, 1991; Zon-
neveld, 2000; Waterhout, 2002). Suddenly, Europe appeared integrated, as op-
posed to the centre-periphery model that until then had framed the thinking
of European spatial planners. Also during the ESDP process, Europe's global
position was considered for the first time.

Zonneveld (2000) describes the long and twisting road of the ESDP process
and what happened to the 'stories' of the Dutch. In 1997, when the Dutch
once again held the presidency of the EU, one of the greatest shifts in the
ESDP process took place: the first official draft of the ESDP lists Europe's glo-
bal competitiveness among its objectives (CEC, 1997b). However, in the ESDP,
after a Spanish intervention, this objective is reduced to balanced competi-
tiveness, and thus the emphasis remains on cohesion (CEC, 1999). Neverthe-
less, albeit reluctantly and less prominently than in the first official draft, the
ESDP recognises the strong 'locomotives' of the economy as an official poli-
cy category (Schön, 1997). So-called gateway cities linking Europe to the rest
of the world are identified as being important for the national and Europe-
an economies, along with the need for good accessibility. The clearest exam-
ple, though, of competitiveness being taken into account is the concept of glo-
bal economic integration zones. The polycentric development strategy calls
for several such zones to be promoted based on their endogenous potential
in order to create counterweights to the pentagon area forming the econom-
ic core of the EU and in due turn a more balanced territory (CEC, 1999). Here
polycentric development includes goals of both cohesion and competitive-
ness. However, as described in a previous section, over time the concept of
polycentricity ceased to be related to competitiveness.

DG Regio: Widening its scope
After publication of the ESDP, European competitiveness disappeared as a
planning issue. With the abolition of the Committee on Spatial Development,
member states were no longer in a position to inject their storylines into the
European discourse. When in the driver's seat, DG Regio had never shown
much interest in competitiveness, and so the second cohesion report focus-
es on reducing disparities between regions and invokes polycentricity for this
purpose and this purpose alone. In it, Europe is viewed as a 'very centralised
territory', a situation that polycentrism should rectify (CEC, 2001d: 29).

However, the third cohesion report, published in 2004, frames cohesion in
terms of development and competitiveness. It signals that territorial dispar-

ities such as "serious difficulties in outermost and peripheral areas or problems of congestion in certain central areas... affect the overall competitiveness of the EU economy" and "cannot be ignored" (CEC, 2004a: 28). Further down, it identifies "urban systems [as] the engines of regional development", and it is because of "their geographical distribution across the EU that an imbalance between the core and periphery is most evident". This statement represents a more refined stance toward conceptualising the European territory. An important new and related element is that of the urban hierarchy, indicating the relative importance of cities and regions for Europe. The third cohesion report distinguishes between "growth metropolises of European importance", mainly located in northwest Europe and thus forming a core area, and cities outside of this area, which, according to four different indicators, have various degrees of development potential. Obviously, invoking such terms would have been impossible without the evidence provided by ESPON. In general, then, the third cohesion report breathes a development-oriented spirit. The term competitiveness is omnipresent, in contrast to its almost total absence in the second cohesion report.

Unmistakably, in putting forward a territorial cohesion agenda, DG Regio is increasingly adopting the competitiveness storyline, which can be explained by the strong emphasis that both the former president of the Commission, Romano Prodi, and the current president, Manuel Barroso, put on the Lisbon Agenda. Over the last few years, this agenda has, together with the constitutional treaty, become the dominant discourse in EU politics. Policy is increasingly being framed in terms of growth and jobs, the key themes of the revised Lisbon Agenda (CEC, 2005). An important example relevant to territorial cohesion is the recent non-paper Cohesion Policy in Support of Growth and Jobs by DG Regio and DG Employment (2005), which includes a short chapter on territorial cohesion and cooperation. Other than the third cohesion report, the non-paper does not present new perspectives on competitiveness. Interestingly, though, it explains "the contribution of cities to growth and jobs" (DG Regio and DG Environment, 2005: 19).

A new concept takes over: Territorial capital
More interesting in terms of producing discourse are the documents tabled at the informal ministerial meetings in Rotterdam in 2004 and Luxembourg in 2005, forming between them the launching pad of the so-called Agenda 2007 process. Again, with the help of others, it was the Dutch who used their EU presidency to promote the competitiveness discourse on territorial cohesion. Inspired by a report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2001), they introduced the concept of territorial capital, arguing that each region has its own specific territorial capital, thereby making investments in one region more effective than in another. Some factors that play a part in territorial capital are geographic location, geographical size of

the region, climate, natural resources, quality of life, and economies of scale. Other factors are related to local and regional traditions and customs and the quality of governance, including issues such as mutual trust and informal rules. Finally, there is an intangible factor – that is, something in the air or the quality of the milieu (MINVROM, 2004; Zonneveld & Waterhout, 2005; see also Chapter 4 in this book).

The concept of territorial capital has been further elaborated in the *Territorial State and Perspectives of the Union*, a document discussed in Luxembourg. Framed in terms of the Lisbon Agenda, the document carries the subtitle *Towards a Stronger European Territorial Cohesion in the Light of the Lisbon and Gothenburg Ambitions* (Ministers for Spatial Development and European Union, 2005). In this document, territorial capital is the key concept, and within this storyline it is thus the successor of the ESDP concept of polycentricity. Yet the meaning of territorial capital, like some other politically successful concepts, is not fully explained. Nevertheless, policy makers are encouraged to design policies so that regions can develop their territorial capital, thereby maximising their competitive advantage.

The concept of territorial capital means a change of paradigm. The emphasis is no longer restricted to strongly urbanised areas, like cities and metropolitan areas, and keeping them in good shape. By paying attention to factors such as size of the region, quality of life, and natural resources, the paradigm has widened the focus to include virtually all sorts of European regions, including rural and peripheral ones, as long as these regions find ways to exploit their unique territorial capital so that it contributes to Europe's competitiveness. This storyline may therefore appeal to a large audience.

In conclusion, the storyline 'Competitive Europe' is mainly advanced by member states in northwest Europe. However, inspired by the Lisbon discourse, DG Regio also has become more receptive to and uses the vocabulary of this storyline for territorial cohesion purposes. The Guellec resolution is less clear on this storyline, but it acknowledges that the territorial dimension should be considered a major element of the Lisbon Strategy (European Parliament, 2005).

5.2.4 Green and Clean Europe

This final storyline, 'Green and Clean Europe', is related to sustainable development and sound management of the environment. It links the European environmental discourse with that of European spatial planning. This storyline has influenced the ESDP process and now looms in the background of territorial cohesion policy. Although the main advocates of this storyline from the beginning have been the Nordic countries as well as Germany and Ireland, the discourse coalition around this storyline has gradually widened.

Sustainable development and spatial planning were first brought closely

together in 1992 when Denmark held the EU presidency. In a document tabled at a meeting of the Committee on Spatial Development, Denmark introduced the concept of spatial balance. The concept amounted to a decentralised urban system based on three principles: (1) urban spread; (2) the development of corridors; and (3) the appropriate use of energy and transport. However, with its connotation of uncontrolled urban growth, the concept of urban spread was a poor choice. What the Danes had in mind was something more in line with polycentric development, based on compact cities in order to avoid the development of megacities (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002). Later, in 1994, the so-called Leipzig Principles referred to sustainable development in its original meaning in the Brundtland Report, published by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987, and noted that "this fundamental concept implies not only economic development which respects the environment, but also balanced spatial development" (BMBau 1995, 43). This definition reflected the Danish concept of spatial balance.

It was no coincidence that the Danes introduced an environmental agenda into the ESDP process. As Böhme (2002) explains, Danish planning covers regional development as well as environmental protection. Business development and transport have to pay attention to environmental concerns as well. In fact, environmental concerns are omnipresent in Danish policy. According to Böhme (2002: 97) "the spatial planning system in general and also the planning act illustrate an increasing environmental orientation". The Brundtland Report was significant in providing a rationale for the policy goals pursued.

In 1992 Denmark's spatial planning agency moved to the Ministry of Environment and Energy, and Denmark in its 1997 national planning report *Denmark and European Spatial Planning Policy* presents itself as "a green room in the European House" (Böhme, 2002: 91). Moreover, when the Danes in the early 1990s decided to play a more active role in EU politics, their priority was to inject Danish green policies into the agenda. It is therefore no coincidence that the European Environmental Agency is located in Copenhagen and that Dane Ritt Bjerregard was the EU's environmental commissioner from 1994 to 1999.

What goes for the Danish attitude toward the environment is also valid for other Nordic countries such as Sweden and Finland, as well as non-EU member Norway. Böhme and Faludi (2000) argue that an emphasis on environmental issues is common to Nordic countries (see also Böhme, 2002). Not only do these countries give priority to environmental protection, but they have also made progress in embracing a wider concept of sustainable development. Rifkin (2004), too, finds a stronger environmental discourse in Nordic countries than elsewhere in Europe and probably in the world.

Be that as it may, the sustainability discourse does not go unchallenged. Schön (1997, 290) reports that, in contrast to the Leipzig Principles, in the first official draft of the ESDP "the emphasis on competitiveness had come, in part, at the expense of the sustainability concept". Under the influence of, among

others, the U.K. and German EU presidencies and the consultation process, where mainly actors from member states in northwest Europe pleaded for a stronger emphasis on environmental protection, this problem was "repaired" in the final ESDP (see Faludi & Waterhout, 2002). This "repair" is also evident in the differences between the subtitles of the first draft of the ESDP and the final version – the first subtitle does not refer to sustainable development, but the second does.

Without a doubt, then, the sustainability discourse has successfully penetrated the ESDP. There is great concern about ecologically sensitive areas, which in the densely populated EU are often being threatened by urban development. Reducing urban sprawl has therefore become a central concern of European planners. The EU Natura 2000 program requiring member states to designate habitat areas and the EU water framework directive offer planners many possibilities for pursuing the policy options of the ESDP, in particular those concerning the use of integrated territorial development strategies.

In the years since approval of the ESDP in 1999, the argument that planners can help to achieve sustainable development in Europe by formulating integrated territorial development strategies has been reiterated many times. For example, a document produced by the Spatial and Urban Development Subcommittee (2003) argues for an integrated space-based approach, something that was repeated while referring to the Gothenburg aims[3] in the documents discussed at the informal ministerial meetings in Rotterdam and Luxembourg (MINVROM, 2004; Ministers for Spatial Development and European Commission, 2005). In fact, the Rotterdam and Luxembourg documents fully recognise the importance of good environmental quality as part of a region's territorial capital. The Bristol Accord, approved in December 2005 by ministers of the member states explores how to develop sustainable communities and contributes to this line of thinking (ODPM, 2005).

Interestingly the concept of sustainable communities also relates to the concept of territorial capital, and planners concerned with territorial cohesion point to the Stockholm-Kista region as an example where sustainability and competitiveness have come together (Heijde & Houtsma, 2006). This region, it is claimed, is one of the most innovative in the world. It is home to a thriving large city that offers all the relevant services and yet is located in a natural green fjord area in which strict environmental regulations apply. Planners are seeking spatial strategies that would integrate the Lisbon and Gothenburg aims by focusing on innovative urban networks, and apparently

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3 "Gothenburg aims" refer to the European Council of 2001 in Gothenburg where a sustainable development agenda for Europe was adopted as a counterweight to the Lisbon agenda that was developed in 2000 and exclusively focuses on economic development. Since then the Lisbon agenda is often referred to as the Lisbon and Gothenburg agenda.

such networks may include a large dose of greenness and cleanness. The sustainability and environmental discourse may thus become part and parcel of urban design and development. Planners promote integrated approaches and are not afraid of combining several storylines that may eventually feed into territorial cohesion policy and into the development of the relevant discourse.

The storyline of a 'Green and Clean Europe' seems to be supported by a wide discourse coalition consisting of Nordic countries, their neighbours in northwest Europe, the Alpine countries, and presumably (although there is little evidence for this) some countries in southern, central, and eastern Europe (such as Slovenia). The coalition also includes the European Parliament, which has argued that "the European Sustainable Development Strategy agreed in Gothenburg in 2001... should be more visible... in the future Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund interventions" (European Parliament, 2004: 8). The chapter on territorial development in the third cohesion report of the European Commission uses exactly the same vocabulary (CEC, 2004a). One sign of hope is that new Objective 3 of the Structural Funds aims to stimulate transnational territorial cooperation. Whether integrated strategic projects will be sponsored as well remains to be seen. Finally, as part of a 'Green and Clean Europe', DG Regio and DG Employment (2005), in their non-paper on jobs and growth, call attention to the need to redevelop brownfield sites, public spaces, and industrial sites within cities and emphasise the need for an integrated approach especially to rural regions that depend heavily on tourism in order to find in these regions a better balance between their various assets, including natural and environmental ones.

5.3 Storylines compared

Together, the four storylines point out the potential elements of a territorial cohesion policy. As noted, because of the current institutional uncertainty, territorial cohesion will for a while remain subject to a political struggle between these storylines and the discourse coalitions that support them. A comparison of the storylines using four indicators – (1) geographic focus and key concepts; (2) discourse coalition; (3) operationalisation and scope; and (4) elements of European models of society – reveals overlaps and where tensions and conflicts might occur (Table 5.1).

As for geographic focus, there is quite a bit of divergence among storylines. The storyline 'Europe in Balance' is concerned with only part of the EU territory – the weaker and marginal regions – whereas, potentially at least, the other storylines are related to the whole territory of the EU.

In terms of support or the composition of discourse coalitions, a comparison of storylines reveals considerable overlap among them, with the result that actors may support more than one storyline. Moreover, coalitions are not

Table 5.1. Storylines compared

	Geographical focus and Key Concepts	Discourse Coalition	Operationalisation and scope	Elements of European models of society
Europe in Balance	- Regions performing under EU avarage - Polycentric and balanced development - Services of general interest - Centre-Periphery	- CEC, EP, CoR - Probably all member states with emphasis on MS outside the Centre - CPMR, AER etc. - Stable coalition but growing criticism	- Subsidies - Territorial strategies and/or territorial indicators - Cooperation - Cohesion policy	- *Dirigiste* - Solidarity - Culturally bound - A little pessimistic
Coherent European Policy	- EU territory - Good governance - Reduce spatial conflicts	- the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, France, Belgium - DG Regio, Secretariat General - Increasing support	- Territorial development frameworks - EU policies with spatial impact	- Moderately *dirigiste* - Environmental concern
Competitive Europe	- EU territory with emphasis on potentially well performing regions - Territorial capital - Territorial main structures - Networks - Lisbon/Gothenburg Agenda	- the Netherlands, Northwest member states - DG Regio, CEC - Positive ministerial meetings support may be growing	- Incentives - Territorial framework indicating EU main structure - Voluntary regional and local spatial positioning reports - Cooperation - Cross sectoral	- Liberal (moderately) - Cultural independency - Optimistic - Environmental concern
Green and Clean Europe	- EU territory with emphasis on environmentally sensitive areas - Spatial balance	- Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Ireland, United Kingdom, Slovenia - CEC, EP, CoR - In general broad passive support	- Environmental directives - Local and regional integrated territorial development strategies - Cross sectoral	- Global responsibility - Moderately optimistic

CEC = Commission of the European Communities, EP = European Parliament, CoR = Committee of the Regions,
CPMR = Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions of Europe, AER = Assembly of European Regions,
DG Regio = Directorate General for Regional Policy.

easy to determine. For example, the support for 'Europe in Balance' seems quite stable, but 'Competitive Europe' is relatively new and may thus soon receive greater support. Support itself can vary from active to passive. Therefore, although stakeholders may not be against a 'Green and Clean Europe', their hearts may beat faster for a 'Europe in Balance', because they expect, for example, a higher direct return in terms of investments, subsidies, and extra jobs. Assessing potential tension between one storyline or the other may come down to analysing the priorities of the stakeholders, but because of the strong position of EU cohesion policy and the relatively stable coalitions supporting that policy, it is safe to conclude that 'Europe in Balance' will receive the most support. Nevertheless, this storyline is receiving increasingly greater criticism

for its methods of operation and lack of effectiveness, while there seems to be growing support for the principles and perspectives of the relatively new storylines of a 'Competitive Europe' and a 'Green and Clean Europe', It is conceivable that, to counter this trend, 'Europe in Balance' will have to gradually incorporate the new storylines in order to sustain its broad support. In fact, the remarkable change of tone and vocabulary in the third cohesion report may be a sign that such discursive adoption is already under way (CEC, 2004a).

In terms of operationalisation and scope, the four storylines seem to largely agree on the use of strategic territorial frameworks, except that 'Europe in Balance' and 'Coherent European Policy' would formulate strategies on the scale of the EU as a whole, while the other storylines would focus on lower administrative levels. Another difference is the use of subsidies. Support seems to be growing for a more incentive-based policy. This means that in the case of territorial cohesion regions have to convince investors that they are worthy of investments (the philosophy of 'Competitive Europe'). Finally, there is a difference among storylines in scope. 'Europe in Balance' primarily focuses on existing cohesion policies, and all other storylines potentially address all sector policies, with 'Coherent European Policy' the prime example. In terms of support and discourse coalitions, this factor also makes 'Europe in Balance' a more likely winner, because fewer stakeholders have to be convinced.

How do storylines relate to each other in terms of European models of society? Because there are no easy definitions of such models, analysts must rely on their own interpretations of the models. In this chapter the models are described by using general concepts that are relevant in the context of this chapter. One element of the models often cited is the style of government, be it the liberal Anglo-Saxon style or the French dirigiste style. Storylines focusing on weaker regions tend to adopt the French style, while 'Competitive Europe' in particular is based on a more liberal attitude.

These storylines also differ in their emphasis on solidarity. Solidarity is not totally absent in the 'Competitive Europe' storyline; it is just less important. In a sense, this finding is related to the more relaxed attitude that the 'Competitive Europe' storyline seems to have toward cultural identity. By contrast, identity is a key rationale underlying 'Europe in Balance', assuming that Europeans are in a sense bound to their place of birth. 'Competitive Europe' takes the view that identity is something much more fluid. Indeed, in this respect Reid (2004) describes a Generation E – Europeans in their twenties and thirties who are connected to Europe-wide networks via telecommunication and cheap airlines and who use English as their lingua franca, but who also retain their national, regional, and local identities. Like the storyline 'Green and Clean Europe', this Generation E is credited with a perfect sense of what is going on in the world, making this and the 'Competitive Europe' storylines more outward looking and globalised than those confined to weaker regions. Taking this argument further, one might pose the hypothesis that the sto-

rylines will attract different audiences, in terms of individuals, than 'Europe in Balance'. 'Europe in Balance' might sound more convincing to the proverbial blue-collar workers and their political representatives, whereas 'Competitive Europe' and 'Green and Clean Europe' would attract the highly educated, white-collar knowledge workers or, in modern European lingo, the Lisbon/Gothenburg professional. Likewise, it could be argued that the two sets of storylines are grounded, respectively, in pessimistic and optimistic outlooks. Rifkin (2004) has touched on this issue in an attempt to pinpoint elementary differences between Europeans and Americans in attitude and perception.

5.4 Conclusions

The picture, then, is one in which the 'Europe in Balance' storyline seems to be in the best position to remain the leading storyline and to sustain its current strong position as the main source of inspiration for future territorial cohesion policy. However, its foundation seems to have some cracks, and, in fact, the major opposition in terms of discursive power may come from the relative newcomer, 'Competitive Europe'. This storyline tells a diametrically opposed story and is grounded in a fundamentally different European model of society. It is a more optimistic, more individualistic, and at the same time more globally integrated model. However, as appealing as the story may sound, telling such stories requires political courage, something that is in scarce supply these days. It is most likely that the 'Europe in Balance' storyline will become less pessimistic and attractive elements of the other storylines, including 'Green and Clean Europe' and 'Coherent European Policy', will be added, leading the way toward emergence of a new territorial cohesion discourse.

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6 The emerging EU Territorial cohesion agenda: The ball in the court of the member states

Introduction to Chapter 6

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In 2005 I was involved in organising the first ESPON Youngstars Seminar in Ljubljana, together with Kai Böhme, Gabriele Tatzberger, Lars Porsche and Marko Peterlin. Here I met João Mourais Mourato, a PhD student at UCL. A few months later he asked us to contribute to a special issue of the Portuguese journal *Sociedade e Território*. The special issue aimed to kick off a professional debate on the European influence on national planning and to inform the Parliamentary discussion concerning the National Programme for Territorial Planning Policies to be held in the first term of 2006. This is exactly the type of trigger that I am sensitive to and according to João the journal served its purpose. Within this book the chapter adds value as it sheds light on the self-organising capacity of the member states in a changing political context and how they succeed in finding ways to engage in a new policy development process that eventually leads to the adoption of the Territorial Agenda in 2007. The article forms an update of an earlier account in the journal *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* (TESG)[1] on what we then called the Rotterdam process. It includes the most recent relevant developments, like the 'non' and 'nee' to the Constitutional Treaty, and the several proposals for the Financial Perspectives 2007-2013. Having been written in the same style, together with the preceding article in TESG, the chapter comes closest to forming a direct follow up to The Making of the ESDP.[2] If anything, the chapter shows how the ever-changing political context of the EU impacts on the European spatial planning process and, perhaps, also on the researchers themselves.

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[1] Faludi, A. & Waterhout, B. (2005) The Usual Suspects: The Rotterdam Informal EU Ministerial Meeting on Territorial Cohesion, in: *TESG 96* (3): 328-333.
[2] Faludi (2006) and Faludi (2007) continue in the same line and together provide a good overview of how the Territorial Agenda process was brought to an end and how it should be interpreted. Both articles are to be found in the online journal European Journal of Spatial Development: http://www.nordregio.se/EJSD/.

6.1 Introduction[3]

With the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe on hold and the Financial Perspectives 2007–2013 in the balance, European integration looks in poor shape. Whereas this has, at least for the moment, stopped the European Commission from working on territorial cohesion, the Member States are pursuing a joint territorial cohesion agenda. With a side-glance to the annual State of the Union Address by the U.S. President, they aim for a document called The Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union and a second document The Territorial Agenda of the EU. Other than with the making the European Spatial Development Perspectives (ESDP) (CEC, 1999) where the European Commission footed much of the bill (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002), the work is done by the Member States without direct support from Brussels. However, naturally, in formulating the Territorial State and Perspectives, they will want to make use of the results of the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON) co-financed by the Commission. Indeed, the document should distinguish itself for being 'evidence-based', a concept much discussed in the UK (Solesbury, 2002; Faludi & Waterhout, 2006).

Adoption of the document is intended to take place under the German Presidency in 2007. The Territorial Agenda Process started at an informal meeting of EU ministers in 2004 under Dutch Presidency at Rotterdam. Obviously, in 2004 ministers anticipated the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty signed during a ceremony only one month earlier, on 29 October, in Rome. The European Constitution defines territorial cohesion as an objective of the Union and as a shared competence of the Union and the Member States.

First we sketch the background, related as it is to the ESDP. Then we discuss in a more or less chronological order the European Commission's activities and progress in the Territorial Agenda Process. Throughout the article possible implications will be outlined for Portugal.

6.2 Positioning territorial cohesion

In 1997 territorial cohesion popped up in the Amsterdam Treaty in Article 16 on services of general economic interest. The initiative had come from then French minister of European Affairs, Michel Barnier, soon to become Commissioner for Regional Policy under Romano Prodi. In 2001 the Commission published the Second Cohesion Report (CEC, 2001) with a chapter on territorial

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3 As the reader will recognise this article has been written at the end of 2005. Since then much has happened. Whilst the article remains valid, some elements have become outdated. They will be addressed in footnotes. Also, a follow-up publication by Faludi (2006) can be found at: http://www.nordregio.se/EJSD.

cohesion, giving that concept a wider interpretation than in Article 16. The chapter reflected concerns articulated in the ESDP with its three so-called policy guidelines: (1) development of a balanced and polycentric urban system with a new urban-rural relationship, (2) securing parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge, and (3) sustainable development, prudent management and protection of nature and cultural change. The Third Cohesion Report (CEC, 2004) continued along similar lines. By that time, the Constitutional Treaty was nearing completion, and it was certain that it would provide a basis for EU territorial cohesion policy. As a member of the Praesidium of the European Convention, Barnier had been in an ideal position to see to this.

During the ESDP process two issues of conflict that are still relevant today troubled its completion. One was the 'competence issue', about which more will be said below. The other concerned the substantive orientation of the ESDP and whether it should focus on cohesion or on competitiveness. In terms of territorial emphasis a cohesion agenda would be more interesting for lagging regions, while competitiveness would direct the attention to stronger regions, the underlying assumption being that stimulating stronger regions would lead to a higher return on investment. Northwest European member states argued in favour of the latter, whereas south European countries led by Spain stressed the importance of cohesion. In the end the concept of polycentric development, referring as it does to both objectives, formed a bridge between the two (Waterhout, 2002; see also Chapter 3 in this book) and hence, proposed by Spain, the ESDP speaks of balanced territorial development (Zonneveld, 2000). As we will see the cohesion-competitiveness issue is still at stake, the difference being a change of context with the Lisbon-Gothenburg Strategy now explicitly arguing for Europe to become the most competitive and social knowledge economy in the world by 2010.

The other issue has to do with competence. A shared competence, which applies to territorial cohesion in the Constitutional Treaty, means that the Commission has the right of initiative. However, things have gone differently and its position in territorial cohesion policy remains weak. So for the present the Commission takes a back seat. Its recent communication Cohesion Policy in Support of Growth and Jobs (CEC, 2005) pays attention to the territorial dimension of cohesion policy, but for the foreseeable future the Commission will no longer give seriously attention to territorial cohesion as such.[4]

As indicated, meanwhile though Member States have organised themselves. They work jointly on their own interpretation of what territorial cohesion policy might entail. Initially the Commission kept its distance, dismissing the initiative as driven by national interests, but in the run-up to the Luxembourg informal EU-ministers meeting on 20-21 May 2005, its interest was

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4 Though see Faludi 2006.

growing. Nevertheless, Member States remain at the helm, even more so than during the ESDP process. Member States are circumspect of the Commission encroaching upon their sovereign control over their national territory.

The above relates to the 'competence issue' during the ESDP process (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002). Then Member States challenged the Commission taking the initiative, arguing that it had no competence in the matter. Now, unlike the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, the Treaty establishing the European Community does not define competences but objectives, like harmonious development or economic and social cohesion. The Commission can propose relevant measures. If accepted by the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament under 'co-decision making' they become European law.

So competence was not the problem. Spatial planning or spatial development could have been interpreted as serving one or the other stated objective of the Union. However, there was no political will to do so, and hence – to the chagrin of the Commission – making the ESDP was considered a matter of voluntary co-operation between Member States. Nevertheless, the Commission supported the ESDP and took it upon itself to publish the document in all, as of then, eleven official Community languages – which is why it is referred to as CEC, 1999. Also, alongside with the Member States, the then Commissioner of Regional Policy, Monika Wulf Mathies has assented to it. Presently, history seems to repeat itself with territorial cohesion policy the object of concern. This can be explained by discussing various meanings of that concept.

6.3 The Commission's Territorial Cohesion Agenda

The Third Cohesion Report makes clear the Commission's ideas as regards territorial cohesion:

> The concept of territorial cohesion extends beyond the notion of economic and social cohesion by both adding to this and reinforcing it. In policy terms, the objective is to help achieve a more balanced development by reducing existing disparities, preventing territorial imbalances and by making both sectoral policies which have a spatial impact and regional policy more coherent. The concern is also to improve territorial integration and encourage cooperation between regions. (CEC, 2004: 27)

Territorial cohesion, therewith, is presented as a policy of integrating various sectors, from a cohesion perspective. As we will see below the Member States say to pursue a broader agenda, in which the central concern goes to policy integration from a spatial perspective. For now the difference is not entirely clear though. There is, however, more concern for Europe's territorial diversity and the fact that policies might work out differently as between different regions.

Remarkable, however, is that the emphasis in the Third Cohesion Report is put on making regions more competitive by using their endogenous potential in order to realise more cohesion. We saw the same in the ESDP process and in discussions about regional development strategies. For the 2007-2013 programming period the idea is to add to classic convergence policies (like under the current Objective 1) by introducing a new objective, Regional Competitiveness and Employment. Each and every region other than those receiving 'convergence' funding would be eligible (see Table 6.1). High performers amongst regions could thus apply. After all, investments there could lead to higher returns in terms of growth and jobs than in poorer regions. To make this work though, the latter need better accessibility to primary networks between European centres through improvements of secondary transport networks creating the link with these regions. This is the win-win situation that Commission officials see between cohesion and competitiveness factors. With this the Commission tries to achieve balanced development, like in the ESDP's second policy guideline: securing parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge. Note that the Third Cohesion Report does not speak of polycentric development anymore. Barnier considered this something for researchers rather than for politicians. Anyway, these secondary networks will also safeguard access to services of general economic interest, an important issue for lobbyists from the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions (CPMR) and the Assembly of European Regions (AER), both with a strong presence of French regions. Other aspects of this policy are the promotion of innovation and research, intra-urban regeneration and the prevention of natural hazards, the latter may provide opportunities for Portugal in the light of recent forest fires.

Considering Portugal's peripheral location and weak accessibility by road and train, the improvement of secondary networks linking regions to international airports and high-speed railway systems seem one of the most important issues in order to better integrate Portuguese regions into the European territory. Interestingly, under the new Objective 2 about regional competitiveness and employment, the Lisbon region, being phased out as a recipient of Objective 1 support, would again be eligible for funding. This probably means, however, that funds have to be spent in a different way addressing other needs. Also, as several Commission officials recently explained to one of the authors, there will be increasing attention at the country desks of DG Regio for the territorial logic of the spending of structural funds. Apart from the need, in particular for regional policy makers, to have a good overview of regional territorial characteristics and structures, this sometimes may imply that, in order to maximise the return on investment in terms of cohesion, funds may be better spent in more prospering areas. Through cooperation between stronger and weaker regions, the assumption is that in the end both should be able to profit from this strategy. This requires a new way of thinking, especially at the regional level, about the territory, or, as we will see

Table 6.1 New cohesion policy

2000-2006	2007-2013	Instruments	Proposed	Financial Perspective 2007-2013
Objective 1	Objective 1: Convergence and competitiveness	Cohesion Fund ERDF ESF	78%	81,54%
Objective 2	Objective 2: Regional competitiveness and employment	Regional level: ERDF National level: ESF	18%	15,95%
Objective 3				
INTERREG URBAN LEADER EQUAL	Objective 3: European Territorial Co-operation	ERDF	4%	2,52%

Sources: CEC 2004; CEC 2006

below, about the region's territorial capital. Consequently what is needed also is a further strengthening of regional institutional capacity. A way of doing this is developing regional territorial strategies, not as a blueprint, but as soft communicative instruments or frameworks as a starting point for a process of collective learning between public authorities and stakeholders including private companies, interest groups and inhabitants.

Next to Convergence and Regional Competitiveness and Employment future cohesion policy foresees a third objective: European Territorial Co-operation (ETC). This amounts to mainstreaming Community Initiatives, in particular INTERREG. As before, it will promote territorial co-operation at cross-border, inter-regional and transnational level. The budget proposed for this new objective, 4% of the total (some € 336 billion) comes down to € 13 billion (see Table 6.1). For transnational co-operation – arguably the most interesting form for territorial cohesion policy, think for instance about a project with Spain and France on exchanging experiences on preventing forest fires – this would mean an increase from a mere € 1,4 billion for INTERREG IIIB to € 6 billion. The idea was to spend these additional resources on so-called *projets structurands* (Structuring Projects).

Other than the current generation of projects, these should make lasting contributions to spatial development. However, during the failed budget negotiations in Luxembourg on 15 June 2005 the ETC strand was reduced by almost 1,5%, nearly the entire amount allocated to transnational co-operation. The Germans in particular are not keen on this type of co-operation. To them this would come close to spatial planning, a competence of the Mem-

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5 In the meantime, after a motion by the European Parliament (EP, 2006) to amongst others raise the European Territorial Co-operation budget with an extra € 300 million, consensus has been found on the Financial Perspectives 2007-2013. The total amount for cohesion policy is € 308 billion in 2004 prices. As Table 6.1 shows 2.52% (€ 7.75 billion) is reserved for European Territorial Co-operation of which € 5.57 billion will be allocated to cross border co-operation, € 392 million to inter regional cooperation and € 1.58 billion to transnational co-operation (CEC, 2006).

ber States and in Germany of the Länder. At the time of writing the outcome remains in the dark. Six net-contributors want to fix the EU budget at 1% of the European GDP, reducing the total cohesion policy budget to € 250 billion (Bachtler & Polverari, 2005). In addition, the UK in particular wants to put an end to the multi-level governance system in EU regional policy and to direct support from Brussels to the Member States. Obviously, this all may have serious consequences for remaining convergence regions in Portugal and elsewhere, which may speed up the need for national and regional governments to think about alternative ways for regional development.

As indicated, the saving grace is that in the meantime Member States have formulated their own ideas on territorial cohesion. This may turn out to be the only game in town.

6.4 The member states initiative: The 'Territorial Agenda Process'

As indicated, the Territorial Agenda Process, started at the informal EU ministerial meeting on 29 November 2004 (Faludi & Waterhout, 2005). There the Dutch Presidency (2004) tabled a document Exploiting Europe's Territorial Diversity for Sustainable Economic Growth with an agenda until the German Presidency in 2007 when ministers are expected to adopt the so-called Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union. Based on the work of ESPON, it is intended to be evidence-based. Also, it will not confine itself to cohesion policy, but will be broader in scope. Member States do not get tired of emphasising that this document will not be about budget but about substance. And, although the parallels with the ESDP process are striking, it will not be an ESDP II.

Still, the Territorial Agenda is rooted in the ESDP process during which officials met on the Committee on Spatial Development (CSD). After the ESDP had been approved the CSD ceased its operations. The Commission no longer footed the bills and set up a new Spatial and Urban Development (SUD) sub-committee of the official Committee for the Reconstruction and Convergence of Regions. Many old hands of the ESDP process are members of SUD, but the Commission holds the chair. In 2003 under the Danish Presidency a number of old hands formed the Mermaid Group (after Copenhagen where the meeting took place) and explored options for refocusing the ESDP process on the concept of territorial cohesion. This resulted in the Mermaid Document (SUD 2003) prompting the Dutch (with the help of the French) to organise the Rotterdam ministerial meeting.

After Rotterdam, Luxembourg was the next Presidency to organise another ministerial meeting on 20-21 May 2005. DG Regio insisted to relate territorial cohesion to regional policy, and Luxembourg complied. Ministers discussed

a Scoping Document and Summary of Political Messages for an Assessment of the Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union (Luxembourg Presidency, 2005a), in short, the Scoping Document. It was put together by a Dutch and Luxembourg official and made use of ESPON results. As the document itself puts it:

> Its purpose is to offer the EU institutions, Member States, regions and other stakeholders a better insight into the territorial state and development perspectives of the Union, and a common and understandable information base to address key territorial challenges and opportunities. By that it contributes to the identification of a territorial approach for a better integration of the territorial dimension into EU (and national) policies. (Luxembourg Presidency, 2005a: I)

The ministers confirmed that the key challenge was to integrate the territorial dimension into EU policies and to achieve coherence in the development of the EU territory on the basis of the concept of territorial cohesion. In their opinion, territorial cohesion can add value to the implementation of the Lisbon and Gothenburg Strategy. They saw potential for co-ordination across sectors and policies and emphasised reporting and dialogue as important elements for this without creating new procedures. (Luxembourg Presidency, 2005b: 1)

Obviously, this is an ambitious agenda of influencing EU policies by means of 'soft', communicative instruments, in particular the intended 'Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union'. Next we discuss the 'Scoping Document'.

6.5 The scoping document

Six years after its publication, many ESDP ideas remain valid, but the context has changed. There is the stated intention of the EU to become the most competitive knowledge economy by the year 2010, commonly known as the Lisbon Strategy, later augmented by the Gothenburg Strategy on sustainable development. Ministers responsible for territorial cohesion saw their work as a contribution to this Lisbon/Gothenburg Strategy. In addition, the largest ever enlargement of the EU with ten new member states has taken place. Other concerns are the rise of energy prices and demographic change. In thinking about territorial cohesion, these issues, as well as risk prevention of natural hazards, are taken on board.

The Luxembourg Scoping Document comes in three parts. Part A defines the scope and discusses the added value of territorial development policies. Part B provides an assessment of the current territorial state of the European Union in the light of the Lisbon and Gothenburg Strategy and of the impact of EU policies on territorial development. Part C provides perspectives for strength-

ening the structure of the EU territory, for increasing coherence between EU policies with spatial impacts and for making the best use of the European Territorial Cooperation strand under the new cohesion policy 2007-2013.

The document is organised around three themes: territorial capital, regional integration and connectivity, and governance. Territorial capital is the key concept and is assumed to be unique for each region, so investments in one region may be more profitable than in others. The concept was coined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in its Territorial Outlook 2001 (OECD, 2001). Accordingly, territorial capital can best be utilised at regional and local level. The Scoping Document, too, focuses on urbanised areas as the motors of the economy. Interpreted in this way, territorial capital reminds us of 'endogenous potential', i.e. specific qualities of regions, in the ESDP. Discussing territorial cohesion in terms of territorial capital enriches the debate on economic and social cohesion. Formulating new criteria can create a new perspective on regional differences currently measured by a single yardstick: the extent to which regions diverge from the average income per head and the employment rate in the EU. It should be noted though that, much as territorial cohesion, the concept of territorial capital is not entirely clear (Zonneveld & Waterhout, 2005; see also Chapter 4 in this book).

Next to exploiting territorial capital, ministers propose where necessary to improve regional integration in, and connectivity to, other areas that are important for its development. In weaker regions the priorities are strengthening urban-rural relationships and improving secondary transport networks, similar to what the Commission proposes in its new cohesion policy. With regard to territorial governance the agenda seems different. At least, Member States argue to adopt a spatial development approach with a somewhat broader aim than the Commission's territorial cohesion approach: i.e. in a sense that it integrates a territorial dimension into EU and national policies, and to do so not only from the perspective of cohesion, but from the wider perspective of coherent territorial policies, horizontally as well as vertically (see also Schön, 2005). Be that as it may, a bottom-up approach is being promoted, since this would contribute to synergies between sector policies and hence contribute to the Lisbon Strategy. One of the ideas is to promote the integration of the transnational and the EU level in national and regional territorial development strategies. EU policies, too, need to be more aware of their territorial impacts. Considering the Commission's way of doing things, this is quite a challenge. Be that as it may, the next section sketches the road ahead.

6.6 The road to Germany (2007)

For reasons that are familiar to the reader, barely a month after Luxemburg the Union was thrown into disarray. However, the impact on the Territorial

Agenda Process has been limited. The so-called Coming Presidencies Group (CPG) with, at the time of writing, the UK, Austria, Finland and Germany and also previous presidencies like The Netherlands and Luxembourg and, since this country has a special interest in territorial cohesion, France prepares the Territorial State and Perspectives of the European Union. Recently Portugal and Slovenia due to hold the Presidency after Germany have joined. An ESPON representative, too, attends the meetings, but the Commission is not always present. It is short of personnel and its primary focus is the continuation of ESPON. In addition, whilst considering the Territorial Agenda Process interesting from a substantive point of view, without an EU competence, it reckons nothing much will come of this in terms of policy.

Another reason for the lack of Commission enthusiasm is that it is afraid that compromises between national interests will reduce the usefulness of the outcome. Remember also that the Territorial Agenda Process does not receive the active support of the Commission. However, the Commission does attend meetings where Directors General of Member States discuss the work of the CPG and smooth out controversial issues before ministerial meetings. These meetings have become standard in the Territorial Agenda Process and remind us of the CSD role in the ESDP process.

The process runs smoothly. The Germans have a key position since the Territorial State of the European Union will be finalised and approved during their Presidency. In the interim, the UK, Austria and Finland have promised to make contributions. Admittedly, under the UK Presidency there will be no meeting on territorial cohesion but rather one on 'sustainable communities' with ministers responsible for urban development. The concept reminds us of that of territorial capital, but not so much of the other concepts on the Territorial Agenda. Also, in December 2005 the UK will organise a meeting of the people doing the actual work to further discuss the drafting the 'Territorial State' and the strategy to involve stakeholders. Austria has announced that it will focus on the relation between territorial and economic development as well as on territorial governance. Finland will organise a DG-meeting in order to, amongst others, discuss the draft 'Territorial State of the Union'. So will Germany in the run-up to the final ministerial meeting. In order to guarantee a successful outcome the Germans will designate a couple of officials to work on this process as from January 2006.

6.7 Outlook

So the Commission is taking a back seat. The ball is in the court of the Member States. Also, the Territorial Agenda goes beyond what the Commission had in mind. The latter operates within clearly defined areas of competence and budget-lines. Member States co-operating voluntarily know no such con-

straint. Of course, the downside is that nobody can guarantee that their jointly agreed policies will be applied. This is why they focus on substance and on 'evidence based' policies that carry conviction with policy makers, in particular those concerned with particular sectors.

Be that as it may, giving a territorial dimension to EU policies is gaining support. Territorial issues are becoming part of policies such as the second rural development pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy and the sustainable coastal development strand of the new maritime policy and also of environmental policies. In addition, the lack of a territorial cohesion competence notwithstanding, the new cohesion policy 2007-2013 will become more territorial on the strength of the argument that this makes it more effective. So there is a diffuse but steady move to paying more attention to territorial issues.

The Committee of the Regions and the European Parliament give their support. The former has a committee on territorial cohesion (COTER) that passed resolutions on this topic, the most recent one arguing amongst others "...that the territorial dimension is the very foundation of regional and cohesion policy." (CoR, 2005: 5) Likewise, on September 28 the European Parliament adopted a resolution based on a report by Ambroise Guellec considering territorial cohesion a fundamental objective of regional planning and calling "...for the territorial dimension to be considered a major element in the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies." (EP, 2005: 5) This resolution calls for the Commission to draw up before 2007 a White Paper on territorial cohesion. The Commission had this in mind, but now for obvious reasons has abandoned the idea.

A territorial cohesion competence is a distant prospect, but giving a territorial dimension to EU policies seems realistic. In this ambivalent situation Member States stick their necks out, trying, much as during the ESDP process, to shape an agenda for improving European territorial governance.

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7 Mixed messages: How the ESDP's concepts have been applied in INTERREG IIIB programmes, priorities and projects

Introduction to Chapter 7

This chapter was first presented as a conference paper at the Regional Studies Association conference in June 2006 in Leuven. It is based on our joint research in the context of the ESPON 2.3.1 project, which was led by Nordregio. In the project Dominic and myself were responsible for tracing the application of the ESDP at the EU and transnational level. In Leuven we met Stefanie Dühr, who had just accepted a job at Nijmegen University. Andreas and I met her again one month later in Mexico where the World Schools of Planning Conference was organised. Soon after the summer holidays a meeting was organised at OTB where, with Wil, Andreas and Vincent Nadin (at that time a visiting lecturer at OTB), the idea to develop a special issue on the Europeanisation of planning was given shape. Chapter 8 is also included in this issue.

The main focus in this chapter is on how the ESDP has performed as a frame of reference in INTERREG cooperation and implicitly informs us of the extent to which European spatial planning is recognised as a structure by various agents at lower levels. It shows that the INTERREG IIIB programme indeed functions as a transmitter of ESDP principles, but that the regional actors who finally work with them reinterpret these principles in terms of their own institutional context and policy objectives. In so doing it says something about the generative as well as transformative capacity of European spatial planners. A lesson from this chapter is that there is a gap between the ideas and concepts developed at the EU level and the daily practices at lower levels, which could be used as bottom-up feedback.

7.1 Introduction

During the process that led to the adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective in 1999, the INTERREG IIC Community initiative was established. Whilst floods in north-west Europe and droughts in southern Europe provided the political momentum to establish the initiative, the link with the ESDP process was always clear from the start (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002; Doucet, 2002). INTERREG IIC aimed to stimulate transnational co-operation between national, regional and local actors in the field of spatial planning and intended to put the ESDP's principles into practice.

After three years of operation, INTERREG IIC was followed by INTERREG IIIB in the new programming period 2000-2006. This new programme had a larger budget and, following the Guidelines of INTERREG III, saw its focus widened towards achieving "a higher degree of territorial integration across large grouping of European regions..." whilst taking account "...of the recommendations for territorial development of the European Spatial Development Perspective" (CEC, 2000: 7). In the meantime the ESDP had been finalised and identified the INTERREG Initiative as one of the key means by which territorial issues can be coordinated. The INTERREG Initiative, according to the ESDP, represents "an important instrument for the application of the ESDP" (CSD, 1999: 39). This paper examines this process of application of the ESDP through INTERREG IIIB programmes, priorities and projects. What we find is that processes of application are not straightforward and that the ESDP is not always easy to translate into INTERREG priorities and even less easy to translate into INTERREG projects.

By means of introduction it is important to note that the ESDP itself was drawn up by the European member states in cooperation with the European Commission and provides a non-binding policy framework aiming at a balanced and sustainable development of the territory of the European Union. It presents three main concepts (which are further divided in 13 'policy aims' and 60 'policy options') to achieve this.

1 *Polycentric Spatial Development and a New Urban-Rural Relationship* – Development of a polycentric and balanced urban system and strengthening of the partnership between urban and rural areas. This involves overcoming the outdated dualism between city and countryside.

2 *Parity of Access to Infrastructure and Knowledge* – Promotion of integrated transport and communication concepts, which support the polycentric development of the EU territory and are an important pre-condition for enabling European cities and regions to pursue their integration into the EMU. Parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge should be realised gradually. Regionally adapted solutions must be found for this.

Figure 7.1 Top-down and bottom-up influences on the INTERREG programme
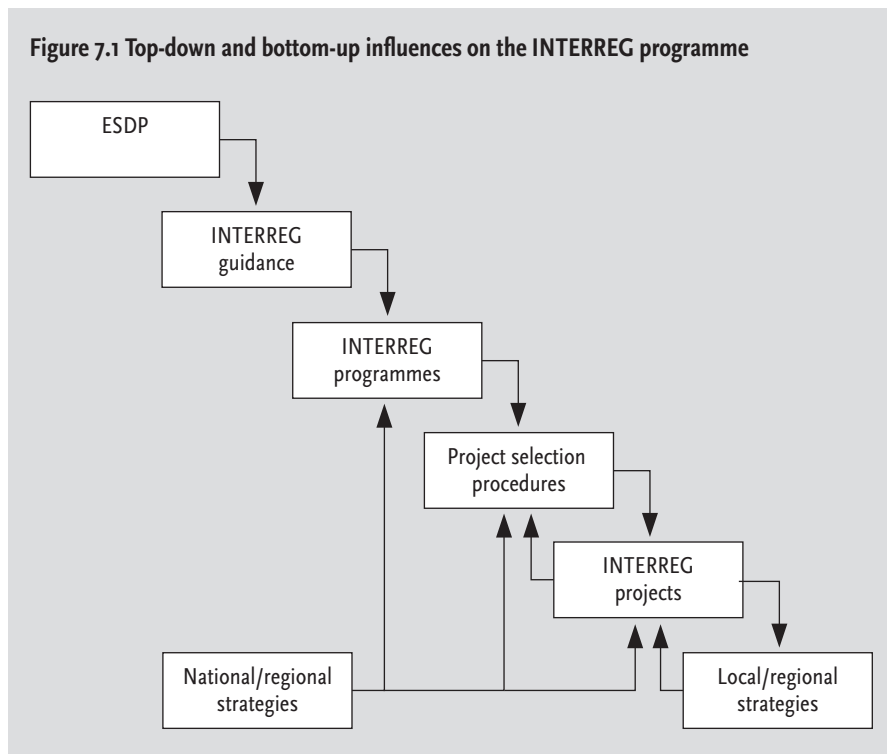
3 *Wise Management of the Natural and Cultural Heritage* – Development and con-
servation of the natural and the cultural heritage through wise manage-
ment. This contributes both to the preservation and deepening of regional
identities and the maintenance of the natural and cultural diversity of the
regions and cities of the EU in the age of globalisation. (CSD, 1999: 19-20)

In addition to these three concepts, the ESDP puts forward the notion of the
'spatial approach', which concerns new forms of cooperation to deal with ter-
ritorial issues, particularly vertical and horizontal cooperation. The ESDP con-
siders regional and local authorities to be key players in applying its policy
options. It also contends that cooperation beyond national borders has a key
role in applying the concepts contained in the ESDP. In short, the ESDP thus
expects much of the INTERREG IIIB programme.

The paper is structured along three steps of the INTERREG IIIB process: (1)
the preparation of the INTERREG III guidelines; (2) the identification of the
INTERREG IIIB programmes; and (3) the selection of INTERREG IIIB projects.
For each of these stages, we examine how the ESDP has influenced the course
of events. Figure 7.1 provides a simplified overview of the different steps with-
in the INTERREG process, starting from the ESDP through to the INTERREG
guidelines to the INTERREG IIIB programmes to the project selection process-
es and ultimately to INTERREG IIIB projects. Clearly, the INTERREG programme
combines top-down and bottom-up elements. In practice, the process is more
complex and less linear than illustrated: each stage is open to many other
influences. In our review we will focus on all 13 INTERREG IIIB programme
areas, but, in order to provide a more detailed analysis, we will zoom in on

the northwest Europe programming area.

Whilst our analysis applies to all three ESDP concepts, particular attention is focused on the application of the first of these concepts: polycentric spatial development and a new urban-rural relationship. Arguably, this is the ESDP's dominant concept. However, despite its formulation in the ESDP, in our view the concept comprises two separate parts: (1) polycentric development, which can apply to several levels of scale and relates to issues of cohesion and competitiveness (Davoudi, 2003; Zonneveld *et al*., 2005); and (2) urban-rural relations, which basically are a concern at the local and regional scale. Hence each of the three INTERREG steps which structure our paper will be structured in two parts.

The paper itself draws on work that the authors of this paper have carried out as part of two projects: the ESPON project on the application of the ESDP (Nordregio, 2007) that was carried out between 2004 and 2006 and the ESPON-INTERACT study to polycentric development and urban-rural relations (Zonneveld *et al*., 2006). We also draw on a review of European programme documents, as well as mid-term evaluations of the INTERREG programmes from different programme areas, the assessment of selected INTERREG projects (carried out as part of the ESPON-INTERACT study) and interviews with people who were involved in drafting, approving and implementing one or more of the INTERREG Programmes (carried out as part of the ESPON project). Before we present our findings, we first discuss the concept of application.

7.2 Application: a matter of performance

Since its publication in 1999 several researchers have examined and explained the application of the ESDP in various parts of Europe. Böhme (2002, 2003) examined the influence of the ESDP in the Nordic countries (and also the influence of the Nordic countries on the ESDP), explaining this interactive process using the concept of discursive integration, drawing on theories of policy communities (Marsh & Rhodes, 1992), network governance (Kohler-Koch, 1999) and policy discourse (Hajer, 1995). Research by Faludi (2001, 2003, 2004, 2006) focussed on the application of the ESDP in northwest Europe, examining how it has performed as a strategic framework and generated related follow-up activities. Shaw and Sykes (2003, 2005) and Sykes (2007), focusing on the case of the UK, followed a similar approach. Janin Rivolin and Faludi (2005) examined the role of the ESDP in spatial planning policy in south European countries and used a variety of approaches to do so. ESPON project 2.3.1 on the application of the ESDP examined the effects of the ESDP in 29 countries across Europe, looking primarily at conformance between the ESDP and domestic policies, that is the extent of correspondence between ESDP and domestic policies (Nordregio, 2007).

Looking to conformance as the only indicator for application may have serious consequences in terms of drawing conclusions as conformance outcomes do not necessarily indicate that a strategic plan, like the ESDP, really had an impact. Conformance, in other words, does not always indicate performance. One of the conclusions of the ESPON project on the application of the ESDP was that the ESDP has had an influence on national and regional policy and practice to varying degrees and that the ESDP has had different effects in different places. However, since policy does not take place in a vacuum, the ESDP has always been one of many influences on national and regional policy and practice. This makes it hard to measure or test the extent of the ESDP's influence or establish whether it has been a key driver of change. The issue of causality is problematic in such situations.

Böhme (2002) circumnavigates this issue by introducing the concept of discursive integration and as a consequence views the process of applying the ESDP from a wider perspective. He explains the level of conformance between EU and domestic planning using the idea of *zeitgeist* in which the ESDP both sets the agenda for policy and expresses current policy thinking. Other studies have taken a more exclusive focus and attempted to isolate the influence of the ESDP from other influences. Faludi (2001) and Sykes (2007) both conclude that research to the application of the ESDP, and to strategic spatial planning documents more generally, is a laborious affair which requires detailed investigation of how the ESDP has been used in decision making processes and in the various steps of these processes.

In addition to the more specific literature on the evaluation of the ESDP, there is also a wealth of more general literature on the evaluation of strategic spatial planning documents (e.g. Mastop, 1997; Mastop & Faludi, 1997; Faludi, 2000). Faludi (2003) considers it more appropriate to describe follow-up activities to strategic planning documents like the ESDP as application rather than implementation since, unlike masterplans or blueprints, strategic planning documents frequently necessitate further elaboration and sometimes even require other major changes to take place (e.g. institutional changes). Elsewhere, Faludi (2001) contends that application is not about changes in spatial development but rather about shaping the minds of actors. He argues that application occurs whenever strategic planning documents such as the ESDP help actors make sense of a particular situation or problem.

At the basis of this reasoning is the assumption that actors are not passive recipients of strategic planning documents such as the ESDP. Instead, they are active players in a process where the concepts or goals of strategic planning documents are usually not of primary concern to the actors involved. Instead, their primary concern is often to try to make sense of a particular situation, justify a certain choice or solve a specific problem. In this process, actors may use strategic planning documents such as the ESDP to assist their task. In such a case we can speak of performance. Conformance then becomes a mat-

ter of secondary importance, because by doing so, actors will often reinterpret concepts, principles and strategies from their own perspective, and perhaps also ignore or reject other parts of the same document that are less relevant for their task.

Accordingly, the application of strategic spatial planning documents is evaluated by their performance, rather than by the conformance of follow-up activities. Performance, according to Faludi (2001), is concerned with shaping action, whilst conformance is concerned with the correspondence between the outcomes and intentions of strategic plans. Although relevant, application is thus not primarily related to outcomes but rather to decision-making processes. In terms of performance, Mastop and Faludi (1997: 822) argue that "a strategic plan is performing well (...) if it plays a tangible role in the choices of actors [including the makers] to whom it is addressed (...) and/or of other actors to whom the plan appeals, in either case irrespective of whether or not outcomes correspond with the plan." This means that performance does not always coincide with conformance: there can be performance without conformance. Performance without conformance can for example occur some time after publication of a strategic plan and may be an indication that the plan has become outdated and needs revision. As regards the relation between performance and conformance Faludi draws on the work of Wallagh (1994) to distinguish between four types of situations when we can speak of application:

1. actors' decisions are influenced by the ESDP and conform;
2. their decisions depart from, but actors nevertheless take account of ESDP messages;
3. ESDP messages are being invoked in situations unforeseen by its makers;
4. the ESDP is being elaborated, thus demonstrating generative capacity (Faludi, 2001: 666).

There can also be conformance without performance since it is not always the case that conformance means that a plan has been applied. Using Böhme's idea of discursive integration, outcomes might also be the result of zeitgeist. Within the ESPON 2.3.1 project on the application of the ESDP, many possible examples of 'conformance without performance' were found, as it was not possible to relate a certain change in policy or practice with the ESDP (Nordregio, 2007). In these cases, it was not possible to conclude that the regional outcomes have been due to the application of the ESDP. In this paper we are interested in both: whether cooperation under INTERREG IIIB was in conformance with the ESDP and whether the ESDP has actually influenced the decision making processes in INTERREG IIIB and thus performed. In doing so we will pay attention to the four types of situations as listed above, the latter three of which all refer to instances of performance without conformance.

7.3 Application of the ESDP in INTERREG III Guidelines

Whilst it may seem natural that the European Commission's guidelines for the INTERREG III Initiative (2000-2006) take account of the ESDP, this is not necessarily so. In this respect it is important to realise that the ESDP, being a document from the member states, lacks any status, whilst INTERREG as a Community Initiative is the exclusive responsibility of the European Commission. Although policy makers of both the member states and the Commission were united in 1996 in their aim to relate INTERREG IIC to the ESDP, this could have changed over time. Nevertheless, the Guidelines for INTERREG III were drafted in 1999 alongside the finalisation of the ESDP by Commission officials who were closely involved in and committed to the ESDP process and, as a result, the Guidelines refer directly to the ESDP.

Being published in 2000, the Guidelines set out the general objectives, eligibility criteria and thematic priorities for all INTERREG programmes. Conformance between these guidelines and the ESDP is apparent in several ways. Not only is the ESDP explicitly mentioned in the guidelines, albeit only once, various indirect references to the ESDP can also be found. The title of the guidelines for example refers to "harmonious and balanced development of the European territory", mirroring the sub-title of the ESDP ('Towards Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the European Union'), and certain thematic priorities of the guidelines, particularly for transnational cooperation, very much reflect some of the ESDP's policy aims and policy options. Examples include terms such as cooperation between urban and rural areas, polycentric and sustainable development, 'gateway cities' and 'global economic integration zones', all of which appeared in the ESDP (and none of which appeared in the European Commission's guidelines for the earlier INTERREG II Initiative).

The issues of polycentric development and urban-rural relationships are mentioned in the guidelines. The priority topics identified for transnational cooperation projects include the elaboration of "operational spatial development strategies on a transnational scale, including cooperation among cities and between urban and rural areas, with a view to promoting polycentric and sustainable development". Urban-rural relationships and polycentric development are clearly central here. In terms of access to infrastructure and knowledge, the priority topics identified for transnational cooperation projects include the promotion of efficient and sustainable transport systems and improved access to the information society. The guidelines also contain reference to the management of the natural and cultural heritage. One of the priority topics identified for transnational cooperation projects includes the management of cultural heritage and natural resources.

As far as outcomes are concerned, it could be argued that key elements of

the ESDP have been incorporated into the Commission's guidelines for the INTERREG III initiative. There is thus conformance. As for performance, we need to examine whether the ESDP has also changed the thinking of decision makers. In other words, we need to examine whether the ESDP had an effect on the drafting process of the INTERREG guidelines. Whilst we cannot present definitive evidence, our conclusion is affirmative. Although the INTERREG guidelines were being developed some time before the ESDP was approved in 1999, we believe that there has been significant influence. This is not unique for strategic plans whose preparations take several years during which a substantial amount of interaction takes place with stakeholders. This might be considered a case of pre-application, although we prefer to consider it as application. In fact, even the INTERREG IIC Guidelines, which were developed in 1995 and 1996, were influenced by preparatory documents for the ESDP, such as the Leipzig Principles (Doucet, 2002). In any case, the INTERREG III Guidelines were drafted in DG Regio within the European Commission, which also played an active role in making the ESDP (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002; Doucet, 2002). Whilst the spatial approach had already permeated the INTERREG IIC Guidelines, we believe that the development of the ESDP influenced the drafting of the INTERREG III Guidelines, particularly from the point of view of new terms and concepts.

7.4 Application of the ESDP in INTERREG IIIB programmes

Developing the INTERREG IIIB Programmes is a task of national and/or regional representations of the countries and regions covered by the programme area (see for example Pedrazzini, 2005; Doucet, 2002). This is thus a stage within the INTERREG process where national and regional interests can become intertwined with the Commission's Guidelines. Here we can examine both performance and conformance. Because we have only investigated the drafting and decision-making processes of the Community Initiative Programmes in one of the thirteen INTERREG IIIB programming areas, we mainly discuss the performance of the ESDP in North West Europe and then examine more generally how ESDP messages have been taken on board across all thirteen INTERREG IIIB programmes.

7.4.1 Developing the programme in northwest Europe

The INTERREG IIIB programme in NWE was a continuation of the previous INTERREG IIC North Western Metropolitan Area (NWMA) programme but the NWE programming area was somewhat larger than the NWMA's area and included a number of additional parts of northern France as well as the whole

of Switzerland (see Dühr & Nadin, 2007). Within the NWMA programme, the flagship project concerned the development of the NWMA Spatial Vision (NWMA Spatial Vision Group, 2000; Zonneveld, 2005), which was inspired by the ESDP.

According to various people involved in the process of drafting of the Community Initiative Programme (CIP) for the NWE area (who we interviewed), the preparation of the programming document was subject to numerous political debates about its content especially in relation to issues of national interest. These took place within the International Working Party (IWP), a temporary structure which later became the Monitoring committee.[1] At the core of the CIP for the NWE area, five priorities were defined:

1. A more attractive and coherent system of cities, towns and regions
2. Accessibility to transport, communication infrastructure and knowledge
3. Water resources and the prevention of flood damage
4. Stronger ecological infrastructure and protection of cultural heritage
5. Enhancement of maritime functions and the promotion of territorial integration across seas.

In terms of performance we should note that priorities 3 and 5 do not owe their origins to the ESDP: objective 3 came about as a result of intensive lobbying by actors previously involved under Interreg Rhine-Meuse Activities (IRMA), a strand of INTERREG IIC which has a substantially higher budget than the NWMA as a whole while objective 5 mainly was driven by the UK and Ireland. Priorities 1, 2 and 4 of the CIP correspond closely with the NWMA Spatial Vision Principles. The NWMA Spatial Vision was in turn heavily influenced by the ESDP: it elaborated on the ESDP's three guidelines by adding an internal and external dimension, resulting in six principles in the Spatial Vision (as such the spatial vision forms an example of the fourth type of application). Thus, the CIP was inspired by the ESDP, but mainly via the NWMA Spatial Vision, as an intermediate step.

The case of North West Europe presents one example of how operational programmes have been developed. It also shows that the use and application of the ESDP in INTERREG IIIB areas depends on political decisions concerning issues of national and regional interest, which are partly determined by territorial characteristics. Thus the application of the ESDP in other programmes may not necessarily follow the same pattern. As will become clear from the next sections, the actors within the various programmes attach different weights to different priorities.

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[1] The monitoring committee could not draft the CIP since a Monitoring and Steering Committee can only come into existence after the Commission has approved the CIP.

Table 7.1 ERDF Funding according to ESDP priorities and INTERREG IIIB cooperation area

	ERDF con-tribution 2000-2006 (in million euros)	Polycentric Spatial Develop-ment (%)	New urban-rural rela-tionship (%)	Parity of access to infrastruc-ture and knowledge (%)	Wise man-agement of the cultural and natural heritage (%)	Spatial integration (%)	Other (including programme administra-tion) (%)
Alpine Space	60.6	7.6	7.6	32.1	35.6	11.3	5.9
Archimed	79.5	3.3	6.4	19.7	44.8	9.3	16.5
Altlantic Area	118.7	17.8	5.9	28.2	30.1		18.0
Azores, Madeira, Canaries	136.0	3.9	7.4	34.3	18.0	8.2	28.2
Baltic Sea	100.2	28.2	8.7	19.5	15.6	22.7	5.4
Caribbean Space	12.0	<5.4	<5.4	>35.8	31.7		>21.7
Central and Danubian Space (CADSES)	153.7	12.8	5.5	18.3	40.2	13.9	9.4
Indian Ocean/Réunion	5.0	26.0	13.0		24.0		37.0
Northern Periphery	21.2		8.9	22.5	24.1		43.9
North Sea	129.3	9.0	8.7	16.7	42.1	14.1	9.5
North West Europe	328.6	19.1	4.8	26.1	29.7	9.4	10.9
South West Europe (SUDOE)	66.0	7.0	10,0	28.9	27.0		27.1
Western Mediterranean	103.6	15.2	4.8	21.6	39.5	11.9	7.0
Total	**1,314.4**	**>13.5**	**6.5**	**>24.4**	**31.6**	**10.8**	**>13.2**

7.4.2 The allocation of funding as a performance indicator

Table 7.1 provides a number of examples of measures from INTERREG IIIB Programmes that show coherence with the ESDP's three main policy concepts. What is apparent from the table is that the main priorities of most Strand IIIB Programmes are quite coherent with the ESDP policy guidelines. In other words, there is conformance between the main priorities of most Strand IIIB Programmes and the ESDP. This is unsurprising since the 2000 Communication from the European Commission laying down the guidelines for INTERREG III specifies explicitly that Strand B proposals should take account of the ESDP (see above). What is interesting is that the programming priorities of some areas directly reflect the ESDP policy guidelines (e.g. Atlantic Area, CADSES and the North Sea Region), whereas in other areas, the programming priorities bear much fewer similarities with the ESDP's policy guidelines (e.g. Baltic Sea, Indian Ocean Area and Northern Periphery). Also noteworthy is the fact that the programme priorities in a few areas do not always reflect all three of the ESDP's policy guidelines very closely. In some areas, for example, it is difficult to identify priorities that are specifically relevant to polycentric urban development or urban-rural relationships.

An examination of the allocation of financial resources, according to the main measures of all the INTERREG IIIB Programmes (Table 7.1), provides an indication of performance in the application of the ESDP to INTERREG. Where-

as the allocation of funds only forms one possible performance indicator, it is an interesting one because the division of budget over thematic priorities provides an insight into the interests and expectations of decision makers concerning the usefulness of ESDP concepts for their own territory. Priorities receiving less funding arguably are deemed less relevant in a particular programming area and its respective regions.

What can be seen in Table 7.1 is that, in general terms, funding is skewed towards priorities concerning sustainable development, prudent management and protection of nature and cultural heritage. This is especially the case in programming areas that cover parts of south Europe. For programming areas that cover parts of north Europe (both northwest Europe and the Baltic Sea Region), funding is often skewed towards priorities concerning the parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge. In all programming areas, funding is relatively more limited for priorities concerning the development of a balanced and polycentric urban system and a new urban-rural relationship.

The latter observation is somewhat surprising given the fact that many of the individuals involved in drafting the ESDP regarded these issues as most important. During the process of drafting the ESDP the concept of polycentric development was embraced as a bridge between cohesion and competitiveness perspectives and therewith as the key to balanced sustainable development (Waterhout, 2002; see also Chapter 3 in this book). This is clear from the Second Cohesion Report of the Commission (CEC, 2003) as well as the prioritisation of projects in the ESPON 2002-2006 Programme (ESPON, 2002). Similarly, improving urban-rural relationships including the avoidance of urban sprawl was one of the cornerstones within the ESDP process and was a key issue in the Study Programme on European Spatial Planning (SPESP). Apparently, the concepts did not fully address the interests of those who drafted the INTERREG IIIB programme documents.

7.4.3 Polycentric spatial development in programmes

What is also evident from Table 7.1 is that the concept of polycentric development appears in all programming documents with one exception, the scarcely populated Northern Periphery, where priorities are directed to improving to communication networks and the potential for sustainable economic development. The occurrence of polycentricity in specific measures of INTERREG IIIB programmes is summarised in Table 7.2, together with the budget allocation. Here it is clear to see that polycentricity is defined or categorised in a variety of different ways. In terms of performance it is interesting to note that the concept of polycentricity has actually been seriously considered in all programming areas, but that, depending on local interests, its translates differently into the respective programming documents.

In general the concept of polycentricity has been elaborated in two ways.

Table 7.2 Occurrence of polycentricity in INTERREG IIIB programmes

Programme	Measures	% budget (total ERDF budget, in million euros)	Description of measures
Alpine Space	1.2	7.6 (60.6)	- Competitiveness and sustainable development*
Archimed	1.2	3.3 (79.5)	- Assistance for urban centres, rural areas and growth of cooperation between them*
Atlantic Area	A.1 A.2	17.8 (118.7)	- Spatial structuring of the Atlantic Area* - Promotion and development of centres of excellence
Azores, Madeira, Canaries	1.1	3.9 (136.0)	- Urban socio-economic development
Baltic Sea Region (BSR)	1.1 2.1	28.2 (100.2)	- Supporting joint strategies and implementation actions for larger development zones* - Promoting balanced polycentric settlement structures
Caribbean Space	1.5	<5.4 (12.0)	- Improving cooperation between both urban and rural areas*
Central and Danubian Spaces (CADSES)	1.2	12.8 (153.7)	- Shaping urban development, promoting urban networks and cooperation
Indian Ocean/Réunion	1.5	26.0 (5.0)	- Regional technical skills
Northern Periphery	--		--
North Sea Region (NSR)	1.1 1.2	9.0 (129.3)	- Elaboration and implementation of transnational polycentric spatial development strategies and polycentrism - Development and implementation of urban complementarity, cooperation and networking
North West Europe (NWE)	1.1 1.2	19.1 (328.6)	- More attractive metropolitan areas in the global and European context - Coherent and polycentric pattern of complementary cities, towns and rural areas, coastal and peripheral areas*
South West Europe (SUDOE)	1.1	7.0 (66.0)	- Strengthening and consolidation of SUDOE's urban system
Western Mediterranean (MEDOCC)	2.1	15.2 (103.6)	- Territorial and urban development: developing cooperation and coherent strategies

* Projects on rural-urban relationships fall under the same measure.

Firstly, spatial structuring of programming areas has taken place. Secondly, complementarities between small and medium sized cities have been identified especially in relatively sparsely populated areas. Examples of the first translation of polycentricity can be found in the Atlantic Area, the Alpine Space, the Baltic Sea Region and North West Europe. The Atlantic Area programme document for example emphasises the importance of the spatial structuring of the Atlantic Area. This structure can be improved by reinforcing the role of metropolitan areas as gateways to larger European and global markets and by strengthening the linkages between small and medium-sized towns. Likewise the main objective in the Alpine Space is to promote it as an attractive macro-region inside the EU, whereas the Baltic Sea Region programme document sees the promotion of spatial strategies a means to promote the integration of macro-regions in the BSR (measure 1.1).

Examples of the second interpretation of polycentricity leading to better complementarities between small and medium-sized cities can be found

in South West Europe, CADSES, North Sea programme, the Baltic Sea Region, North West Europe and Atlantic Space. The latter speaks of increasing polycentricity through the 'promotion of centres of excellence'. In the South West Europe area, the translation of polycentric objectives is mainly by reinforcing the existing urban systems (Strengthen and consolidate the South West Europe urban system). The CADSES programme document does not refer explicitly to polycentricity in its priorities and measures, but measure 1.2, entitled 'Shaping urban development, promoting urban networks and cooperation', focuses on the development of multipolar systems based on economic specialisation and labour complementarities between towns and cities. Measure 2.1 of the Baltic Sea Region concentrates on the use of best practices between regions and metropolitan areas in order to foster a polycentric settlement development. Both the NWE and North Sea programmes focus on developing complementarities between urban centres and especially on the revitalisation of small and medium-sized towns.

What is also clear from Tables 7.1 and 7.2 is that the difference in allocation of finances to measures related to polycentricity in each of the INTERREG IIIB programme areas. The proportions of the total budget for polycentricity measures are relatively high in the Baltic Sea Region, North-west Europe and Western Mediterranean, whilst the proportions of the total budget are relatively low in Archimed, Azores, Madeira, Canaries and Caribbean Space. In contrast to what might be expected, the financial allocation for polycentricity measures does not seem very closely related to the degree of urbanisation of regions.

In terms of conformance, we see a differentiated picture when looking at the concept of polycentric development. Despite being a key concept of the ESDP, the concept is not reflected prominently in all programming areas. In the programming areas where the concept is given prominence, it is interpreted in various ways. In this sense, the ESDP acts both as a spatial strategy and a mechanism for stimulating transnational political and conceptual debate. Naturally, such a normative as well as analytical concept can be interpreted in a number of ways (Davoudi, 2003; Zonneveld *et al.*, 2005) but this is all part of the game of application. From the perspective of performance, we conclude that polycentricity has played a prominent role in decision-making in most of the programming areas. The different translations of the concept can be ascribed to different political and territorial contexts and interests. As Jensen and Richardson (2004) note, it has been the ESDP's urban agenda in particular that has led to new vocabularies and has found wide application over Europe. This is also true for most INTERREG IIIB programming areas.

7.4.4 Urban-rural relationships in programmes

Looking across the 13 INTERREG IIIB programming areas, it becomes apparent that urban-rural issues are identified under a variety of measures (Table 7.3).

Table 7.3 Occurrence of rural-urban relationships in INTERREG IIIB programmes

Programme	Measures	% budget (total ERDF budget, in million euros)	Description of measures
Alpine Space	1.2	7.6 (60.6)	- Competitiveness and sustainable development*
Archimed	1.2 1.3 3.4	6.4 (79.5)	- Assistance for urban centres, rural areas and growth of coopera- tion between them* - Strengthening of the economic integration of island areas and sustainable management of coastal areas - Sustainable development of tourism
Atlantic Area	A.1	5.9 (118.7)	- Spatial structuring of the Atlantic Area*
Azores, Madeira, Canaries	1.2 1.3 1.4	7.4 (136.0)	- Social-economic development of rural areas - Development and territorial planning at regional and insular level, and relations between rural and urban areas - Cooperation in territorial planning and development of rural- urban relations within ultra-peripheral regions of the EU
Baltic Sea Region (BSR)	1.1	8.7 (100.2)	- Supporting joint strategies and implementation actions for larger development zones*
Caribbean Space	1.5	<5.4 (12.0)	- Improving cooperation between both urban and rural areas*
Central and Danubian Space (CADSES)	1.3	5.5 (153.7)	- Shaping rural development
Indian Ocean/Réunion	1.1	13 (5.0)	- Environment and living space
Northern Periphery	3.2	8.9 (21.2)	- Public management and spatial planning
North Sea Region (NSR)	1.3 2.1	8.7 (129.3)	- Development and implementation of new rural-urban and inter- rural relationships, including maritime areas - Effective and sustainable transport in rural and urban areas, including maritime areas, and in new rural-urban connections
North West Europe (NWE)	1.2	4.8 (328.6)	- Coherent and polycentric pattern of complementary cities, towns and rural areas, coastal and peripheral areas*
South West Europe (SUDOE)	1.2	10 (66.0)	- Promotion of dynamic rural areas and development of territorial complementarities for the sustainable planning of SUDOE
Western Mediterranean (MEDOCC)	4.2	4.8 (103.6)	- Promotion of sustainable tourism

* Projects on polycentricity fall under the same measure.

In general, it is possible to say that financial resources made available to ad-dress these issues have been relatively low. Programmes often have various measures that are relevant to urban-rural relationships (Zonneveld & Stead, 2007). Thus, urban-rural relationships are generally treated as a cross-sectoral issue, rather than a priority on its own. Consequently, it is difficult to identi-fy measures that are specifically relevant to urban-rural relationships in some programming areas. Examples include the Atlantic Area, where the program-ming document speaks in terms of 'spatial structuring'. In the Alpine Space programme, the wording of the appropriate measure is even broader: compet-itiveness and sustainability. Cooperation or complementarity between urban and rural areas is explicitly mentioned in only six of the 13 programme doc-uments, but even these documents fail to develop clear strategies to render

this concept more concrete. In the case of CADSES and Indian Ocean/Réunion, the programmes mention rural development or rural territory but do not make the link with urban areas.

In contrast to the concept of polycentric development, the concept of urban-rural issues seems to have been less appealing to the makers of INTERREG IIIB programmes. While in a few cases the concept has led to considerable debate, in most cases urban-rural issues have been incorporated into other thematic issues. This may be related to the general observation that there is still relatively little knowledge concerning the various dimensions of the urban-rural relationships and thus few projects that directly address this issue (Zonneveld & Stead, 2007). Thus, on the one hand the ESDP may have underperformed on the issue of urban-rural relationships but on the other hand it may be unreasonable to have expected much more.

7.5 Application of the ESDP in INTERREG IIIB projects

If the development of INTERREG IIIB programmes can be characterised as a situation where top-down and bottom-up interests meet, then the process of project selection is even more so. This process is a crucial step in implementing both the programme and the ESDP. It is during this step that steering committees (or similarly named groups), composed of national and/or regional representatives, decide whether project proposals are eligible and compliant with the programme. It is the responsibility of the project consortium to make the links between the project proposal and the aims of the programme, and the role of the steering committees to assess whether this has been achieved. As we will see below, though, project selection turns out to be a highly political process where national interests are promoted sometimes rather overtly and bargaining is not unheard of.

7.5.1 Selecting projects in northwest Europe

All INTERREG IIIB project applications for funding in the NWE programming area were required to be sent to the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS). The JTS first checked against various eligibility criteria, including a criterion related to the contribution of the project to "sustainable development and to the implementation of at least one policy option of the ESDP". This criterion was actually cited (together with other criteria) in rejecting a number ineligible project proposals. The JTS then assessed project applications against selection criteria (see Table 7.4) and submitted a project-ranking list to the Steering Committee. Ineligible projects generally scored far worse on selection criterion 4 (often 'poor'), which implies some sort of correlation, albeit a weak one, be-

Table 7.4 Project selection criteria in North West Europe relevant for ESDP application

I Transnationality
1 The project involves a high level of transnational cooperation
II Territorial Planning
2 The project adopts an innovative approach to territorial planning
3 The project will achieve a high level of cross-sector integration
III European Territorial Development
4 The project builds on existing transnational planning documents (e.g. the ESDP, the NWE Spatial Vision)
5 The project contributes to a more geographically-balanced development of the European territory
6a The project improves the territorial impact of EU policies [Action and Investment Projects only]
6b The project delivers a useful contribution to the further development of the ESDP [Study Projects only]

tween eligibility and conformance with the ESDP.

Before project proposals were submitted to the JTS, they were often also influenced by the so-called National Contact Points. National Contact Points assisted potential lead partners in the development of project proposals and it is often during this stage of project development that proposals became related to the ESDP. According to one National Contact Point we interviewed, most projects are truly bottom-up initiatives and partners often have little or no prior knowledge of the ESDP. In their decision to assist potential lead partners national priorities were often leading, with conformance (albeit often implicit) with the ESDP coming in second place. Nevertheless, National Contact Points have thus acted as filters and assisted proposals that demonstrated potential of being in compliance with the ESDP. What remains unclear is whether the exposure to the ESDP has led in cases to a further elaboration of the original project proposal, or whether only the original wording has been rephrased into ESDP terminology.

During the early stages of the programme (in 2002), there were concerns that there would be insufficient relevant project applications for certain priorities. As a result, it was decided to organise extra activities to stimulate certain types of project proposals under some measures, including ones concerning polycentric development, which were under-represented in early applications. Other ways of dealing with the under-representation of some measures were also introduced, such as increased flexibility in applying the project selection and eligibility criteria. The decision taking process within the steering committee has always been highly political and heavily influenced by the national and regional interests of delegations (see also Doucet, 2006).

7.5.2 The role of the ESDP in projects in general

Political tension during project selection is not exclusive for the NWE programming area. Graute (2006), for example, reports similar experiences concerning the political nature of project selection in the CADSES area. Whilst projects are required to comply with the ESDP in most programming areas, this was apparently not always a major concern in the selection process. Nevertheless, the mid-term evaluations and the final evaluations of the INTERREG IIIB programmes have had to consider conformity between projects and

the ESDP. In the North Sea Region, for example, projects are scored according to the degree to which they assist in implementing the ESDP, the Spatial Perspective for the North Sea Region (NORVISION) and/or the EU Trans-European Networks (ECORYS *et al.*, 2004). Although all other programming areas have similar requirements for evaluation, this type of assessment (i.e. scoring against the ESDP) does not always form part of the formal evaluation process.

The question whether the ESDP actually has influenced the minds of individual project partners is a difficult one to answer without extensive research into individual INTERREG projects. However, in terms of performance of the INTERREG programme, various authors recognise a change of planning culture as a result of the INTERREG IIIB programme and partly the ESDP (e.g. Pedrazzini, 2005; Giannakourou, 2005; Zaucha & Szydarowski, 2005). Jančič (2005) concludes that co-operation through INTERREG has widened knowledge and experience and provided better solutions for development challenges in the case of Slovenia. This is probably also the case for large parts of Europe. The role of the ESDP itself in this learning process is however less clear. In general, our impression is that the ESDP's performance at project level has been rather modest. This view is backed by authors such as Doucet (2006), the former head of the NWE Secretariat, who states that the key objective for a region is often "to be involved in project applications approved by the programme steering committee, as the ERDF funding of the programme budget will remain an unused potential as long as no project can be carried out" (Doucet, 2006: 1483). The project content, he asserts, "is less important" (ibid).

7.5.3 Polycentric spatial development in projects

The ESPON-INTERACT study on polycentric urban development and urban-rural partnerships illustrates the extent to which different aspects of polycentricity are being addressed in INTERREG III projects, particularly IIIB projects (Zonneveld *et al.*, 2006). A significant number of the projects with relevance for polycentricity are funded in the Baltic Sea Region and North West Europe programming areas, whilst relatively few relevant projects can be found in the Alpine Space or Northern Periphery programming areas. This is broadly in line with the financial resources available for measures in the programming areas (see Table 7.2).

The ESPON-INTERACT study on polycentric urban development and urban-rural partnerships notes that whilst more than 150 INTERREG IIIB projects belong to measures directly linked with polycentric development, fewer than 40 of these are of direct relevance to the concept of polycentricity (see Annex 1 in Zonneveld *et al.*, 2006). One of the main reasons for this is that many programmes and projects have applied quite wide interpretations of polycentric development. Some projects for example indicate that they address polycen-

tricity if they have any sort of network of actors or regions. Clearly, almost all INTERREG IIIB projects could be defined as addressing polycentricity if such a definition is used. All in all this indicates that the term polycentric development has only in a minority of all cases led to any reflection by project participants about the possible meaning of this concept and its translation to fit the local territorial circumstances. In the majority of the cases, steering committees did not put much effort in stimulating project partners to reconsider their projects in terms of polycentric development as set out by the ESDP. According to the mid-term evaluations for various programming areas, the explanation for this is that most programmes had difficulties allocating projects to priorities. Thus, a somewhat more relaxed approach towards this issue was used in order to prevent insufficient use of these budget lines. Whatever the reason, the performance of polycentricity in relation to INTERREG IIIB projects has been rather weak.

7.5.4 Urban-rural relationships in projects

Whilst polycentricity has been interpreted in various ways the concept of urban-rural relationships can be interpreted even wider. According to Zonneveld and Stead (2007), a significant number of the projects with relevance for urban-rural relationships can be found in peripheral programming areas such as the Canaries, Madeira and Azores (MAC) and Northern Periphery, whilst relatively few relevant projects can be found in programming areas such as Alpine Space, the Atlantic Area and the North Sea Region. A large proportion of IIIB projects with relevance for urban-rural relationships focus on economic and social development (e.g. development, agricultural diversification, food production and marketing) and consumption and amenity issues (e.g. tourism, recreation, leisure, landscape and environment, cultural heritage, open space).

There appears to be little relationship between the number of relevant projects and the financial resources available for urban-rural measures in the programming areas (see Table 7.3 above). However, there does appear to be a relationship between the territorial characteristics of an area and the importance attached to urban-rural relationships in an INTERREG programme. Almost no projects addressing urban-rural relationships have been found in metropolitan areas, whereas there are many projects involving medium sized cities and small towns.

Zonneveld and Stead (2007) conclude that there is quite a distance between the political realities from which INTERREG projects emerge and the vocabulary of the ESDP. Urban-rural relationships remain rather implicit in INTERREG: only a handful of projects explicitly refer to the issue of urban-rural relationships. A number of INTERREG IIIB projects have a clear urban-rural dimension but, despite obvious similarities with the ESDP, most do not frame this in terms of the ESDP or its messages (ibid). Since urban-rural issues play an

important role in regional politics, this might explain the conformity between various INTERREG IIIB projects and the ESDP on the issue of urban-rural relationships.

7.6 Conclusions

After having reviewed the application of the ESDP through INTERREG a differentiated picture emerges. Whereas we have found high levels of conformance at all stages of the INTERREG programme, every single step led to a decrease of the extent to which the ESDP has been able to perform as a framework for decision-making.

With each step of the INTERREG programme the conformance reduces, though still remains quite high. Interestingly, most programmes developed additional priorities and themes in order to address specific territorial characteristics and/or issues that have become topical after the ESDP was published and were not foreseen by its makers. This can be regarded as a bottom-up response, albeit an implicit one, to the ESDP. New themes should be considered in further territorial policy developing processes. Also we see that funding is skewed towards other priorities than what can be considered the ESDP's core concepts. There is no clear spatial or geographical divide according to conformance with the guidelines. At the project level we have found that the same issues are addressed as in the ESDP, but often without using the ESDP's terminology.

Some programming areas have made ESDP conformity a selection criterion, and seem to establish quite a direct link between the ESDP and the contents of projects. However, in reality this has not led to a better performance of the ESDP. In fact, most project proposals are developed by local and regional actors, for most of whom the ESDP is not very well-known. Hence, it is to the Steering Committees to interpret whether the proposal sufficiently responds to the ESDP's objectives or not. However, in reality the projects' correspondence to ESDP themes is just a minor issue if any concern at all in the steering committees' highly political decision making processes. Here a clear divide can be observed between the programme secretariats on the one hand that tend to adopt a transnational view, and the steering committees on the other hand where national representatives pursue national interests and final decisions often depend on the ability to construct package deals serving most needs.

In general, the further one moves away from the ESDP, in terms of INTERREG stages and level of scale, the less it performs as a framework and a source of inspiration. The high level of conformance between INTERREG projects and the ESDP therefore should not be explained in terms of application, but rather in terms of Böhme's concept of discursive integration as 'conformance without performance'. In this picture the ESDP merely is the document that voic-

es the consensus on a European wide discourse, which shallowly covers all aspects of current spatial planning practices in Europe. Conformance with the ESDP then is practically inescapable.

In terms of application of the ESDP's concepts, it is clear that these have not sufficiently reached the project applicants. In terms of application of the ESDP's concepts, it is apparent that the priority and measures most strongly related to polycentric development could not be allocated without additional activities. Although also this may be normal, it points at a certain weakness of the polycentricity concept in a sense that from a regional and local viewpoint there is little demand for this concept (see also Dühr & Nadin, 2007). In other words, there is a considerable gap between the abstract concepts of European spatial planners and the everyday concerns of practitioners at regional and local level.

This leads us to the observation that whilst the ESDP itself has performed less successfully, the INTERREG programme is generally considered successful. As Lähteenmäki-Smith *et al.* (2005) note: "the influence of transnational programmes such as INTERREG cannot be underestimated… with regard to the funding made available for these programmes, it can be argued moreover that the transnational co-operation approach is becoming increasingly important" (p. 14). Moreover, for the next programming period 2007-2013 INTERREG is becoming mainstream EU policy under the name European Territorial Co-operation. It is interesting to see that the INTERREG IIC/IIIB and future ETC programmes, which have come about thanks to amongst others the ESDP's generative capacity, have become an institutional practice with own dynamics and stakeholders that, although addressing similar issues, increasingly wander away from one of its original sources. In terms of performance, the ESDP's role seems to be over.

All this may lead to an uneasy feeling as regards the conceptual framework to analyse application of strategic planning documents. Whereas it is relatively easy to draw conclusions as regards conformance, it appears to be difficult to assess whether this is due to performance or not. The mistake may be to conclude that a plan has performed once there is sufficient evidence of conformance. Conformance, however, is not always the best outcome and can even be counterproductive to the objectives of the original source. This is the case, for example, when the original source has become outdated, or does not apply to a specific local situation. Nevertheless, local actors can be inspired by a strategic plan, but can nevertheless decide to deviate from the original source by mixing it with their own interests, in which case the plan has still performed according to this paper's conceptual framework. Unfortunately, therefore, one must conclude that measuring performance remains a daunting and laborious task, leaving the researcher no other option than to dig deep into decision-making processes.

So the final conclusion regarding the ESDP's application depends on what

is expected from the document. While INTERREG Guidelines required the inclusion of ESDP concepts in the priorities and measures of programme documents, it did not say anything about the relation between the ESDP and INTERREG projects. It was never the aim of the ESDP to apply its concepts specifically to INTERREG IIIB projects. Nevertheless, it is still disappointing to see the wide gap between the ESDP concepts and the regional and local interests that formed the basis for INTERREG projects. This relation should be regarded as a two-way process, with the ESDP influencing projects and vice versa with the projects and programmes (regarded as feedback) influencing the continuing ESDP process.

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8 Episodes of Europeanisation of Dutch national spatial planning

Introduction to Chapter 8

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This article is based on a paper that was presented at the World Schools of Planning Conference, 11-16 July 2006, in Mexico City. Having followed the impact in the Netherlands of the EU Air Quality Directive, as well as other EU sectoral policies, I was surprised to see its mobilising power and observed that at long last even national politicians were paying attention to the European dimension of spatial planning. This inspired me to start relating Europeanisation to theories on application and institutionalisation, something that did not make it into the final article but set me on the track for Chapter 1 of this book. Anyway, Stefanie Dühr was also presenting in my session and it was actually here that the idea of developing a special issue emerged (see introduction to Chapter 7).
This chapter traces the influences of EU policies and European integration on national planning in the Netherlands. It does so by analysing the application of the ESDP as well as by analysing how national planning in general responded to the EU. It turns out that not European spatial planning, but particular EU policies exert influence on Dutch planning and create critical moments for institutional change. In so doing, the chapter also shows the interdependence between, or one might even say the duality of, domestic and European institutions. To bring European spatial planning forward, planners have to play simultaneous chess at at least two institutional levels.

8.1 Introduction

For Dutch spatial planners it came as no surprise when, on 25 May 2006, Mr Van Geel, then junior minister for the environment, objected to the postponement of obligatory soot filters on cars by the European Commission until the year 2009. Nor were they surprised to see him – as the only European Union (EU) member state – voting against tougher air quality norms by the year 2015 at the Environment Council of 23 October 2006. Planners also see the logic in the Dutch Ministry for Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment broadcasting television commercials that draw attention to its € 500 subsidy for a soot filter. In fact, since the 1 January 2005, from which date the limit values of SO_2 and PM10 as set out in the first Daughter Directive (1999/30/EC) of the of the EU Air Quality Framework Directive have to be met, Dutch planners have become very sensitive to air quality issues and welcome all possibilities to improve it.

What has happened? The Netherlands were the only EU member state to relate air quality to spatial planning when it transposed the EU Directive into national legislation.[1] The effect of this is that no new spatial development is allowed at locations where the air quality exceeds the limits set by the EU, which unfortunately is the case in 75% of the country. As we will see below, this meant the start of a new episode of Europeanisation of Dutch spatial planning.

Europeanisation refers to the influence of the EU and its policies on domestic policies and practices and how these policies, in this case planning, adapt to the European context. Although the phenomenon of Europeanisation is not new, it is only recently that academics have paid any attention to it as regards planning (Tewdwr-Jones & Williams, 2001; Dabinett & Richardson, 2005; Giannakourou, 2005). One reason for this is that, unlike in many other policy fields, there is no formal European spatial planning policy.

However, while there is no formal EU competence for spatial planning, over the past fifteen years we have witnessed the emergence of a European spatial planning discourse, which is carried forward by, amongst others, the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), the INTERREG IIC/IIIB programmes, which stimulate transnational cooperation on territorial issues, and the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON), facilitating research into structures and trends in the EU territory (Böhme & Schön, 2006; Faludi, 2006). This discourse aims to further institutionalise the territorial dimension of European policies. Planners often mention two reasons why this would be advantageous: (1) certain territorial structures and developments transcend national borders and need to be addressed at a transnational and/or EU scale

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1 For a comparison with other member states see Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (NEAA, 2005).

and (2) EU sector policies cause an often unwanted impact on domestic territorial development and planning policies and therefore need to be made more coherent from a territorial point of view. Both reasons bear a close relationship to Europeanisation.

The Netherlands are known as one of the most active member states pushing the spatial planning discourse forward. They have played a leading role in the development of the ESDP and the Territorial Agenda of the European Union, which was adopted by the EU ministers responsible for spatial planning and development in May 2007 and could be regarded as a follow-up to the ESDP (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002, 2005; Faludi, 2006). An important motivation for this is the extent to which Europeanisation influences Dutch national spatial planning. This article reveals the most acute of these forces and will show how they translate into national planning policies and into initiatives to further institutionalise spatial planning at the European level.

As processes of Europeanisation are unique to domestic situations, one needs to be aware of local peculiarities, two of which will be presented here. In the Netherlands, planning policies and the organisational structures to develop and implement them do not change without the involvement of certain stakeholders. In the field of planning the most important players (besides the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment) are the Ministries of Economic Affairs, Transport, and Agriculture and Nature, since their policies have a clear territorial dimension. Following the old sector-facet model underlying Dutch planning since the 1970s, the latter are often called sector ministries. In this model, and in contrast to the one-dimensional sector policies, planning was considered a multidimensional policy, or in other words a facet, and therefore had been given a sort of coordinating role. Nowadays, this coordinating role is contested as it is observed that sector policies are also multidimensional, something that the ministries are eager to show (NSCGP, 1999; Priemus, 1999). Yet, as a consequence of the departmentalised manner in which EU policies are being developed, as well as of the principle of departmental autonomy in relation to European affairs, the model seems to re-emerge when 'Europe' comes into play. Because of a lack of competence for European spatial planning at national level, this is to the disadvantage of planning. However, an influential national planning community consisting of experts, academics and practitioners, including planning officials at the ministry, counteracts this relatively weak political position of spatial planning. Interestingly, this community has a strong interest in Europe and its relation to national planning. As we will see, both peculiarities influence the Europeanisation of planning in the Netherlands.

This article will discuss developments in Dutch spatial planning in three chronological steps, which can be seen as episodes of Europeanisation. First, we will briefly review the period from around the 1950s, when national planning emerged, until 1998. This period is characterised by reasonably success-

ful attempts of national planners to integrate the European dimension into national spatial planning and the search for ways to discuss planning at the supranational level. The second period, during which the current *Nota Ruimte* or National Spatial Strategy was developed, begins around 1998 and continues until 2004. One would expect that planners would see their efforts of developing a new national spatial strategy through and seek to implement it. However, during this period the general attitude towards Europe changed and became more reluctant, which also has repercussions for spatial planning. The third period, or episode, starts in 2005 and is still continuing at the time of writing. Due to the impact of the air quality daughter directive the relationship between 'Europe' and spatial planning in the Netherlands for the first time raised awareness beyond the domain of experts and turned into a wider political concern. The article concludes with reflections on the Europeanisation of Dutch national spatial planning. Firstly, however, we will discuss the concept of Europeanisation.

8.2 The concept of Europeanisation

The term Europeanisation has no single meaning as it is applied in a number of ways to describe a variety of phenomena and processes of change (Lenschow, 2006; Olsen, 2007). Nevertheless, within this variety some common elements can be distinguished. For example, Europeanisation is always related to the EU. Also Europeanisation is seen as a process rather than a state of affairs (Lenschow, 2006). Moreover, it is important to realise that, following Gualini (2003, in Radaelli, 2004), Europeanisation is not the *explanans* (i.e. the phenomenon that explains the dependent variables), but the *explanandum* (i.e. the problem that needs to be explained). Currently, studies in Europeanisation focus on the domestic responses to European integration. Europeanisation can be the result of several types of processes. Lenschow (2006) distinguishes between at least three of these processes: top-down (EU → national state), horizontal (state → state) and round-about (national state → EU → national state).

Interpreting Europeanisation as a top-down process means that the EU is often perceived as the direct or indirect instigator of developments at the national level. This understanding is especially common in the literature that describes the impact of EU policies on national policy goals, choices and instruments. The 'top' is considered an independent variable and typically quite clearly identifiable, e.g. a particular EU directive or regulation. Because planners have little or no influence on the development of EU policies, the latter can be considered as independent variables. However, it needs to be emphasised that each member state is responsible for the way it transposes EU policies into domestic legislation and so, depending on national govern-

ance structures, planners may become involved during the later stages of the EU policy process.

Horizontal, state-to-state (or region-to-region) transfer may take place independently from the EU, but can also be facilitated by the EU providing the arena for interstate or interregional cooperation or competition. What comes to mind in the field of planning is INTERREG, which facilitates cooperation between regions, as a stimulator of this type of process of Europeanisation. However, one can also think of a more abstract notion of European integration as the driving force of horizontal Europeanisation processes (Scharpf, 2003, in Lenschow, 2006). The growing awareness of domestic actors that they are part of something larger than a member state gives them cause to reflect on their position within a wider context. In relation to planning, this process is for example illustrated by policy documents with maps and chapters that consider their territory's strengths and weaknesses in a wider transnational spatial context. Williams (1996) has referred to this as spatial positioning.

Horizontal Europeanisation can also be the result of the committee governance model of the EU (often referred to as comitology system) bringing member state officials together and facilitating the exchange of ideas, which in turn may diffuse into national practices. In the case of planning there is the former Committee on Spatial Development, which developed the ESDP, its successor the Spatial and Urban Development subcommittee (Faludi & Waterhout, 2005), the monitoring committee of the ESPON programme or the steering committees managing the INTERREG transnational programme areas. Moreover, the EU is increasingly developing methods intended to facilitate such horizontal transfers and learning, like for example the Open Method of Coordination (Faludi, 2004).

The third concept proposes to consider the processes of Europeanisation from a cyclical, more dynamic point of view. 'Europeanisation is considered a discursive context, creating a frame of reference for domestic actors who not merely react to European impulses but anticipate such impulses by either including bottom-up processes changing the European level or by 'using' or 'endogenising' Europe in domestic politics independent of specific pressures from Brussels' (Lenschow, 2006: 59). In fact, the cycle 'member states co-operating intergovernmentally → adopting the ESDP → applying the ESDP → engaging in developing the EU Territorial Agenda' reminds us of just such a roundabout process, which in reality, of course, is very complex (see also Waterhout & Stead, 2007; see also Chapter 7 in this book).

Processes of Europeanisation ultimately lead to the institutionalisation of a European dimension in domestic policies. Institutionalisation can be understood as a process in which recurring patterns of the agent's behaviour lead to valued and stable organisations, procedures and beliefs. European influences become institutionalised as soon as they are accommodated and translated into daily domestic policies and practices. The similarity between Europeani-

sation and institutionalisation is interesting because it makes us understand better how processes of Europeanisation come about. Generally, following Healey (2006), the main drivers for such processes of institutionalisation are resources, rules and ideas. Freely interpreting Healey's argument, the introduction of such drivers at the EU level may start new processes of domestic policy transformation and innovation. The results of such Europeanisation processes may become visible as changes in domestic policies, political priorities and/or organisational structures (Smith, 2005).

As regards the Europeanisation of planning, it is possible to identify such a set of resources, rules and ideas, most of which have already been mentioned earlier:

1. EU spending policies, in particular regional policy and INTERREG;
2. EU regulations; and
3. European integration and the European spatial planning discourse (see also Böhme & Waterhout, 2007).

Whilst it is possible to analytically distinguish between these three drivers, in reality the Europeanisation of planning will often be the result of a combination of all three of them. Also, as we will see in the following sections, the influence of one driver over the other may vary over time.

8.3 1950-1997: The international orientation of Dutch national spatial planning

The first traces of the Europeanisation of Dutch national planning can already be found in the 1960s when the first national spatial planning report was published. Being a founding member of the European Community, with an open economy and benefiting greatly from its location as one of the entrance ports of northwest Europe, the Netherlands could be expected to pay considerable attention to the international dimension of spatial policies. This international dimension to planning has a long tradition. Already in 1929 the Dutch planner De Casseres argued that not only the regional and national levels belong to the field of *planologie* (the Dutch term for the discipline of spatial planning), but also the European and even the global level. Whilst this may have been utopian at the time, since the 1950s Dutch planners have actively concerned themselves with the scale of northwest Europe, which basically corresponded to the European Community of six founding members (i.e. Benelux, France, Germany and Italy). This has for instance led to the setting up of the Permanent Conference on Spatial Planning in northwest Europe (CRONWE) in 1955, and territorial cooperation in the Benelux since 1970 (Zonneveld, 2005a).

The Netherlands were also eager to participate in the meetings of the *Conférence Europeénne des Ministres de l'Aménagement du Territoire* (CEMAT) of the

Council of Europe, the first of which took place in September 1970. In order to gain a better understanding of spatial structures and trends, six north-west European countries, including the UK, decided in December 1970 in The Hague to establish the European Institute for Regional and Urban Planning (ERIPLAN), which however never achieved to provide comprehensive spatial analyses and comprehensive territorial data. As a consequence of all these activities, which were primarily related to horizontal processes of Europe-anisation initiated by the understanding of being part of something 'bigger', Dutch planners were already in the early 1960s considering the then Europe-an Economic Community as the most appropriate institutional context for cooperation, not least because EEC policies were considered to have spatial impacts (Klerkx, 1998). However, it would still take until 1989 before a French-Dutch initiative led to the first meeting of EC ministers, prompting the start of the development of the ESDP (Faludi & Waterhout, 2002).

The reasons why Dutch planners engage in international cooperation have not changed since they were formulated in the 1960s (Witsen, 1968). Apart from the impact of the Community's regional and other policies, which, according to Dutch planners raised in the spirit of the sector-facet model, should become more 'spatialised' and territorially coherent, a second moti-vation was that territorial developments and policy objectives at the nation-al level were increasingly influenced by, and dependent on, developments in northwest Europe. In particular, Dutch experts considered the area compris-ing the Rhine-Ruhr area, the Belgian cities (now conceptualised as the 'Flem-ish Diamond') and the Dutch Randstad as a highly integrated spatial eco-nomic region (or megalopolis), characterised by intense transport flows and mutual interdependencies (RPD, 1978). More recently, this area has been given labels such as Urban Delta and Eurocore. A third reason less frequently men-tioned was added during the 1990s by amongst others the RaRO (Raad voor de Ruimtelijke Ordening – the independently operating Council on Spatial Plan-ning)[2] and referred to the importance of maintaining the EU's global posi-tion compared to other economic blocks (RaRO, 1995). The European Econom-ic Community, later the European Community and then the European Union, has always been the preferred partner because it is the only international organisation with supranational power and instruments, something that the Dutch deem necessary for properly conducting spatial planning policy.

It was always influential experts that emphasised the need for internation-al cooperation. From the early 1950s a continuous line of high-level officials at the National Spatial Planning Agency (or its forerunners and followers) main-

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2 The RaRO merged in 1997 with other advisory councils into the VROM Council, which covers the entire area of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (or in Dutch *Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke ordening en Milieubeheer* – hence, VROM).

tained interest in the international dimension of planning.[3] A common characteristic of these officials is their strong personalities, intellectual power and ability to convince their ministers and, if they did not hold this position themselves, their directors. Even so, the international dimension has not always been visible in national planning documents. Whereas spatial planning ministers were often willing to engage in international meetings, the parliament and sector ministries were often less convinced by the planner's arguments.

Drawing inspiration from Jean Gottmann's (1961) 'Megalopolis' reaching from Boston to Washington ('BosWash') and following the second motivation to engage in international cooperation, the *First and Second National Spatial Planning Reports* of 1960 and 1966 had already noted that Dutch spatial development was part of a northwest European megalopolis with more than 20 million inhabitants. In contradiction to this the *Third National Spatial Planning Report*, which was published in several parts throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, remained completely silent on the European aspects of planning. After the optimistic and economically prosperous 1960s, the 1970s were characterised by economic crises and shortages of housing. This absorbed the attention of spatial planning, which entered into a crisis of its own. Although Europe remained a focus at the expert level, through for example the publication of the annual report of the Spatial Planning Agency in 1978 (RPD, 1978), the first chapter of which was devoted to European planning, politicians had other things on their mind. During the second half of the 1980s optimism returned, however, and the *Vierde Nota* or *Fourth National Spatial Planning Report* (Fourth Report), the product of a centre-right cabinet with a young liberal planning minister, was heavily inspired by an entrepreneurial and international discourse. The focus was on making use of endogenous potentials based on an optimistic grand vision of the Netherlands in the year 2015.

Interestingly, whereas planners were lacking confidence and focussed on national problems, it was due to a motion in 1985 by a Christian-Democrat and a Liberal parliamentarian that attention focused again on the Dutch position in a European context. The motion itself was directly inspired by the accelerating European integration process, which in 1986 culminated in the adoption of the Single European Act. Another source of inspiration was the European Parliament that in 1983 adopted the so-called Gendebien resolution, which urged the development of a European spatial planning policy. In parallel, the CEMAT adopted the Torromolinos Charter already in 1983, articulating a similar message. This is another example of how 'ideas', in terms of Healey's framework, form the start of another episode of Europeanisation.

Following in the footsteps of the *First* and *Second National Spatial Planning*

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3 Influential officials have been J. Linthorst Homan in the 1950s, J. Vink in the 1960s, J. Witsen in the 1970s and 1980s and D. Martin as from the 1990s.

Reports, the *Fourth Report* in 1988 emphasised the international role of the Port of Rotterdam and of Amsterdam Schiphol Airport, which it called 'mainports' (the Dutch-English equivalent of the Euro-English 'gateways'). The Netherlands were to become a European centre for transport and to this end multimodal transport axes played a key role in the new policy. Obviously, the policy was heavily influenced by a reflection on the country's spatial position in Europe. International competition was largely interpreted as a zero-sum game, and therefore in order to secure and promote the country's economic development much emphasis was placed on the Randstad as the engine of the national economy, competing as a polycentric metropolis with cities like London and Paris.

In the wake of the *Fourth Report* and with the start of the ESDP process in 1989, more attention was given to the European dimension of planning within the National Spatial Planning Agency. This resulted in projects such as the 'Perspectives in Europe' report, which had the task of elaborating on the Fourth Report and raising support for spatial planning in other member states (National Spatial Planning Agency, 2000). This was despite the 1993 *Fourth Report Extra* (Vierde Nota Extra: Vinex) by a new government did not promote a different message as regards the Dutch strategy towards Europe.

In the preparation of the ESDP, the Dutch tried to upload the competitiveness discourse behind the *Fourth Report* and other Dutch policies (MHSPE, 1991; Faludi & Waterhout, 2002; Zonneveld & Waterhout, 2007). The motivation for this is to be found in both the natural tendency of member states to export their policy arrangements and ideologies to the EU level (Börzel, 2002) and the (implicit) hope of the Dutch that this would shift the focus of the Structural Funds Objective 2 to the direction of stimulating 'motors of the economy'. This would be more favourable (in terms of the possibility of receiving resources) for regions in the core of Europe, such as the Netherlands.

The increasing workload due to the ESDP process and, from 1997 onwards, the INTERREG IIC programme, led to the establishment of a modest Unit for International Affairs in the National Spatial Planning Agency. While this could be interpreted as a clear expression of the Europeanisation of Dutch national planning, the majority of the agency's approximately 200 employees had little to do with European affairs. Nevertheless, INTERREG IIC was welcomed as an instrument that would support the international dimension of national interests. Notably, the flagship project of the NWMA Spatial Vision (after the North Western Metropolitan Area, the name of the INTERREG IIC programming area), led by the National Spatial Planning Agency, can be understood from this perspective. Moreover, INTERREG added to the resources of the spatial planning department, which following the sector-facet model is traditionally not a spending department. The work on the ESDP, including its preparatory documents and the Commission reports Europe 2000 and 2000+, boosted

the interest of the planning community in particular. The already mentioned advice from the Council of Spatial Planning (RaRO, 1995) is just one of the many reactions by professional bodies and interest groups. It was during this period that the preparations for the *Vijfde Nota* (Fifth National Spatial Planning Report or Fifth Report) began.

8.4 1997-2004: Developing the National Spatial Strategy

One would assume that with such heavy investment in international planning cooperation the Dutch could be trusted to incorporate the European dimension into their policies. However, this was opposed by other policy domains. The development of the *Nota Ruimte* (National Spatial Strategy) took more than eight years due to some dramatic shifts in the Dutch political landscape. The progress of the discussions, the several draft and intermediate reports and the political shifts are summarised in Table 8.1. The governments Kok (II) and Balkenende (I+II) had very different views on spatial planning and European integration alike. In terms of terminology it is important to note that the process started with the preparation of the *Fifth Report* but from 2003 the process continued as the National Spatial Strategy. This change of terminology is not only a cosmetic one but represents a new style of integrated planning in which sector interests are internalised and the emphasis has shifted towards stimulating development instead of land use control which explains the new designation 'strategy'.

8.4.1 The Fifth National Spatial Planning Report

National planning reports are very influential for the entire policy domain of spatial planning at all tiers of government in the country (Zonneveld, 2005b). It is no surprise therefore that the announcement of a new report stirs excitement in professional planning circles. Such periods also form good indicators of the position of spatial planning *vis-à-vis* the sector departments. After the *Fourth Report* and *Fourth Report Extra* had been published, this position had gradually weakened, and a discussion had started about a revision of national spatial planning policy as well as the planning system, leading to a new Spatial Planning Act.[4] Reports were published by the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR, 1998; NSCGP, 1999; see Hajer & Zonneveld, 2000) and a parliamentary working group chaired by Adri Duivesteijn, then vice chairman

4 The new spatial planning act was approved by both Chambers of Parliament in 2006 and will take effect in 2008 (see http://international.vrom.nl/).

Table 8.1 Overview of the National Spatial Strategy process in the Netherlands

1994-1998

Government under Prime Minister Kok (Labour)

Orientation: Centre-Left

Parties: PvdA (Labour party, centre-left), VVD (Liberal party, right wing) and D'66 (Liberal party, centre-left)

Minister responsible for spatial planning: Ms. Margreet de Boer (PvdA)

1997	Netherlands 2030 – Discussion Report (VROM 1997)
1998	Netherlands 2030 – Debate (VROM 1998)

1998-2002

Government Kok II. (3 August 1998 – 16 April 2002)

Orientation: Centre-Left

Parties: PvdA, VVD, D'66

Minister responsible for spatial planning: Mr. Jan Pronk (PvdA)

1999	Startnota Ruimtelijke Ordening (Kick-off Report on Spatial Planning) (VROM et al. 1999)
2001	Fifth National Policy Document on Spatial Planning: Making Space, Sharing Space – PKB 1 (VROM 2001)
2001-2002	Consultation round
2002	Fifth National Policy Document on Spatial Planning: Making Space, Sharing Space – PKB 2 and 3 (VROM 2002a)

2002-2003

Elections: 15 May 2002

Government under Prime Minister Balkenende (Christian Democrat) (22 July 2002 – 16 October 2002)

Orientation: Centre-Right

Parties: CDA (Christian Democrats, centre), LPF (Pim Fortuyn Party, right wing) and VVD

Minister responsible for spatial planning: Mr. Henk Kamp (VVD)

2002	Stellingnamebrief Nationaal Ruimtelijk Beleid (Positioning Letter National Spatial Planning Policy) (VROM 2002b)

2003-2006

Elections: 22 January 2003

Government Balkenende II (27 May 2003 – 30 June 2006)

Orientation: Centre-Right

Parties: CDA, VVD, D'66

Minister responsible for spatial planning: Ms. Sybilla Dekker (VVD)

2004	National Spatial Strategy – PKB 3 – Position of the Government (VROM 2004a)
2004	National Spatial Strategy – Implementation Agenda (VROM 2004b)
2004-2005	Discussion in the 2nd Chamber, House of Representatives (28 June '04, 17 January '05, 21 February '05)
2005	National Spatial Strategy – PKB 3a (VROM 2005)
Autumn 2005	Decision 1st Chamber, Senate.

of the Labour Party (Tweede Kamer 2000) which, alongside others, emphasised the European dimension of the new planning policy. This was in recognition of the direct and indirect top-down influence of the EU policies and the decreasing relevance of national borders in the lives of Dutch citizens. The parliamentary report suggested, amongst others, that a more integrated and coordinated approach by the Dutch towards the EU could lead to increased attention at the EU level for the territorial impact of EU sector policies (ibid. p. 275).

As if such a suggestion had been foreseen, and as a deliberate attempt by

Figure 8.1 Fifth Planning Report Transnational Policy Vision
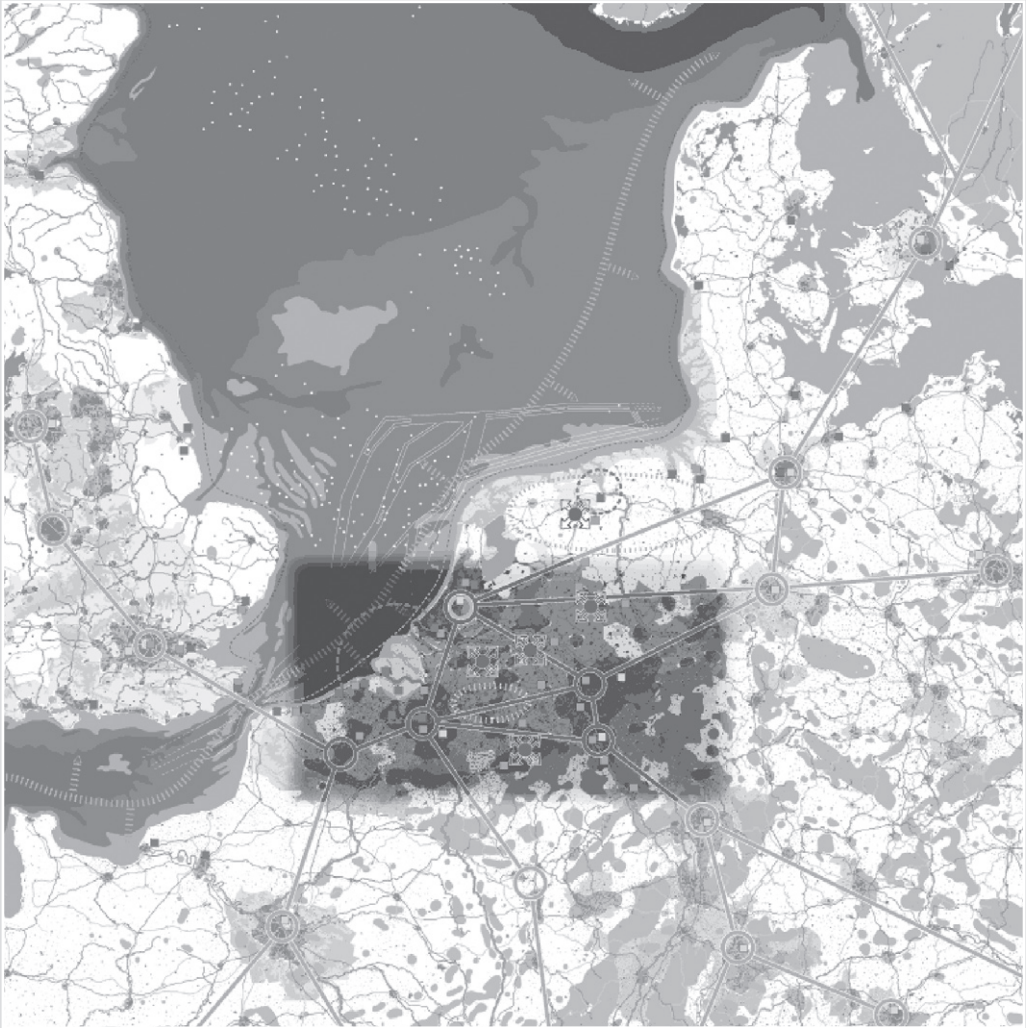
Source: VROM, 2001

the government to demonstrate unity (Priemus, 2004), the spatial planning agency and relevant sector departments jointly published a kick-off report (*Startnota ruimtelijke ordening*) on spatial planning (VROM, 1999), which was a discussion document intended to officially start the process leading to the *Fifth Report* (see Table 8.1). This kick-off report and later the *Fifth Report* positioned the Netherlands through words and maps 'as a European region' within a spatially integrated 'urban delta without borders' in northwest Europe (VROM, 2001). As a consequence, the maps prepared for the *Fifth Report* showed no administrative borders (see Figure 8.1). Europe had become an integral element of national planning.

The fact that the European dimension received much attention was, however, not due to the application of the ESDP. Despite the joint effort leading

to the kick-off report, tensions had developed between the spatial planning agency and the ministries of agriculture, transport and in particular economic affairs and finance. In an attempt to control the spatial planning agenda, each of these ministries already followed their own spatial agenda (Priemus, 1999). Additional mistrust had been created during the ESDP process when the planning agency consulted the departments on the strategy at a relatively late stage in 1998. Well aware of the planning agency's European efforts, the departments interpreted the ESDP as an instrument to strengthen, via the EU, the planning agency's influence on sector policies, thus revitalising the old sector-facet model (Waterhout & Zonneveld, 2000). Also, they did not like the focus in the ESDP on cohesion since this could be translated into future support for lagging regions whereas Dutch policy focused on the contrary, namely on strengthening the core areas (Zonneveld & Waterhout, 2007). The Dutch planners' delegation was therefore during the last stages of the ESDP process forced to express unusual reservations. Internally, they altogether rejected the ESDP as a possible source of inspiration for domestic policies.

The internal strategy of the planning agency was to include an international dimension aimed at identifying concrete actions at three levels: European, transnational and cross-border. For example, a substantive issue with European relevance was the further development of urban networks. This required a national discussion about which Dutch urban networks were considered important and should have a place on what was in an internal note called the imaginary 'ESDP map'. With regard to the ESDP it was proposed that further agreements would be subject to an 'ESDP-proof assessment'. Another activity concerned filtering out all the ESDP policy options and principles with potential interest for Dutch purposes. However, neither the report's project leader nor the minister cared much about the ESDP itself, partly due to its abstractness but predominantly because they were not able to communicate it to the sector departments. Therefore, the international affairs unit devised a strategy of translating ESDP messages into the *Fifth Report* without actually mentioning the ESDP. As a result, new text proposals were easily accepted. Fortunately, after their first impulsive reaction the sector departments in time softened their opinion on the ESDP. As a result the *Fifth Report* refers a number of times to the ESDP, thus forming an example of cyclical processes of Europeanisation.

Arguably more interesting than the few references to the ESDP are, however, the frequent references to influential EU directives and policies such as the Water Framework Directive, the Phosphate and Nitrates Directive, the Habitat and Birds Directives, rural development policy and EU regional policy. In contrast to earlier planning reports, the EU policies, or in terms of Healey the 'rules', are now presented as an integral element of the policy context and, moreover, also as possible instruments for spatial planning. Top-down processes of Europeanisation, hence, are not necessarily problematic.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that better spatial coordination at the EU level between these policies is required and that the government has promised to take care of this (without indicating how). Also, attention has been paid to the relevant policies of neighbouring regions and countries as well as to the INTERREG III programme. In this respect it has been proposed that a discussion should be started with regions and countries at a transnational level with a view to developing joint spatial strategies. However, this has not been followed up due to a changed national context or a lack of interest in neighbouring regions.

In fact, the *Fifth Planning Report* as a whole is rather disappointing as regards its implementation strategy and the role of Europe therein. Whereas all kinds of developments are considered there is no clear strategy as to how they should be dealt with. Apart from some vague intentions for international cooperation and governmental activity related to the issue of coordination, the only issue where the Europeanisation of Dutch planning comes to the fore is with the long-standing concern of sustaining the Dutch competitive position in Europe. Compared to the *Fourth Report* the overall strategy and spatial concepts remain very much the same (Zonneveld, 2005a). Some additions to this strategy concern the new Dutch-English spatial planning concepts of 'brainports' and 'greenports', referring respectively to the Eindhoven region where a clustering of high-tech companies can be found and the glasshouse industry in the Western part of the country. The Second Chamber (Lower House) of Parliament was scheduled to discuss this document on the very day that the Kok II cabinet collapsed.

8.4.2 Towards the National Spatial Strategy: De-Europeanisation

With the new Balkenende I government things changed. Compared to the former Kok cabinets the new centre-right government had strong ideas about European integration, which during the turbulent election period had become primarily related to the potential stream of immigrants due to EU enlargement and the Dutch position as a net contributor to the EU's budget. Also, the new cabinet took a more liberal stance regarding spatial planning, the restrictive character of which was considered to further slow down the already weak economic development. In combination, these factors resulted in an inward-looking perspective of the new cabinet.

In its 'Positioning Letter' (*Stellingnamebrief*) the government set out how it wanted to reinterpret the unfinished *Fifth Planning Report*, which it now called the *National Spatial Strategy*. Furthermore, the Fifth Report's subtitle of 'Making Space, Sharing Space' was replaced by the programmatic phrase of 'Creating Space for Development'. Seven of the ten text proposals by the International Affairs Unit made it into the final version of the letter. Despite the

Figure 8.2 National spatial strategy policy map Economy and agriculture

Source: VROM et al., 2004

new government's early resignation, Parliament could still ask questions on 25 November 2002. Nothing, however, was asked in relation to the international dimension of national planning.

After new elections the Balkenende II government, with a liberal minister responsible for spatial planning, continued to pursue the same planning policy as Balkenende I. The effect was that the elaborate chapter in the *Fifth Report* about international spatial development was cut back to a small section in the *National Spatial Strategy*.

A member of the writing group, who had the explicit responsibility for integrating the international dimension into the policies, has commented on the difficulty of undertaking this task. In contrast to the *Fifth Report*, the writing group was interdepartmental, with teams of two officials (a planner and a sec-

tor representative) working on specific topics. The writing took place between September 2003 and March 2004. The ESDP was no longer considered a direct source. During the final phase of the writing process the drafts on international issues were drastically cut and the focus turned to domestic themes. Because of the lack of support for international issues the previously mentioned member left the writing team in January. The major problem had been to translate the international dimension into concrete proposals and policy options that fitted the general political climate.

The document that was finally presented to Parliament in April 2004 shows little concern for international issues. Although the term 'Europe' often appears and the references to EU directives and neighbouring countries and regions are still numerous, the overall vision of the world outside the country is again couched in terms of competition. Since this was formulated in a rather polarising way, the International Affairs Unit suggested instead the more positive phrasing of 'improving international competitiveness'. This would also pay tribute to the third traditional reason for the Dutch to engage in European cooperation in the field of planning, but the argument remained unheard. As a consequence, there is no mention of a common planning agenda with the countries and regions surrounding the Netherlands. There is also no mention of a strategy towards the European Union and, as Zonneveld (2005a) notes, the statutory policy maps have become inward looking again (see Figure 8.2). So in terms of Europeanisation the strategy has taken at least one step backwards. Ironically, however, after the *National Spatial Strategy* had been adopted, Dutch spatial planning faced an episode of Europeanisation of an unprecedented scale.

8.5 2005-Ongoing: The spatial impact of EU policies

The gap between the analysis and objectives of the National Spatial Strategy and its implementation strategy was also noted by the planning community, amongst others by the VROM Council (the successor of the previously mentioned RaRO). In particular, the council emphasised the lack of attention for Europe, which it found difficult to understand, or even, in its own words, unacceptable (VROM Council, 2004). The Council on Transport, Public Works and Water Management (Raad V&W, 2005) voiced a similar opinion in an advisory report called *Cooperation in the Eurodelta* urging engagement in transnational cooperation with partners in the northwest European megalopolis. Interestingly, whilst admitting that it has no real expertise on the issue, the VROM Council also noted the influence of EU directives that increasingly determine spatial development in the Netherlands.

Shortly afterwards, the independent Netherlands Institute of Spatial

Research (Wouden *et al.*, 2006) published a report with the meaningful title *Unseen Europe* (Ravesteyn & Evers, 2004). It deals with the spatial impacts of EU policies in the Netherlands and was a reaction to the increasing number of headlines and articles in Dutch newspapers which highlighted the role of EU policies in Dutch spatial development and planning. As we will see further later, the report had serious political impact. In the meantime the VROM ministry and with it the Directorate-General Spatial Policy (the new name for the Spatial Planning Agency) was reorganised. A special unit was created for international affairs that was positioned above the four directorates for environment, housing, public buildings and spatial policy. The new 'umbrella' unit employed some 50 civil servants, about 45 of whom dealt with environmental issues and exactly 3 with spatial planning. These three came from the former international affairs unit of the DG Spatial Policy, which no longer exists (the INTERREG IIIB desk and ESPON Contact Point still do, however). The aim of the new umbrella unit was to make EU matters an integral part of the ministry's business, secure better participation in the EU comitology system and in particular in the national interdepartmental committees that coordinate the Dutch input in EU dossiers. As with planning, many environmental policies, too, have a facet character, and through exchanging information and experiences both groups were expected to benefit from the new situation. Unfortunately, this could not redress the impact that the first daughter directive of the EU Air Quality Framework Directive was already having on Dutch legislation.

According to the Dutch *Besluit Luchtkwaliteit* (Decision Air Quality), which came into force on the 1st of January 2005, air quality with to a maximum annual average of 40 micro gram of PM10 per cubic meter of air has to be maintained at all times, with an allowance of 35 times a year when the 24-hour average may exceed 50 micrograms. PM is a catch-all name for particulate matter and 10 refers to 10 micrometres or smaller. In the United States a difference is drawn between particulate matter of 10 micrometer (coarse particles) and of 2.5 micrometres or smaller (fine particles) (Priemus, 2005; NEAA, 2005). It is the smallest particles that are particularly dangerous for human health. Unfortunately, in the West, South and central parts of the country the thresholds are widely exceeded, partly as a result of car use (especially cars running on diesel) and industry.[5]

Dutch environmental policy makers, occupying the same building as the national spatial planners and responsible for transposing the EU Directive into Dutch legislation, were the only ones in the EU who related air quality to

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5 However, it is estimated that in the Netherlands about 54% of the fine particles are of natural origin due to soil conditions and the coastal climate and in all likelihood not dangerous (NEAA, 2005). Be that as it may, the European Commission' Directive does not differentiate between particles of natural and of artificial origin.

spatial planning and land use. What this comes down to is that, even where plans and proposed developments themselves do not have an impact on air quality as such, construction is not allowed if the possibility exists that citizens will be exposed to air of poor quality. As a result, from 2005 the Council of State started to block building and infrastructure projects in all areas with insufficient air quality (in particular around motorways and in city centres). Obviously, in a country that suffers from road congestion (OECD, 2007) and a shortage of housing, such a measure has a considerable impact. The Association of Dutch Communities (VNG), for example, estimated the costs for both public and private parties at some € 7.7 billion (Priemus, 2006).[6]

Needless to say, the politicians were shocked. This, along with the already mentioned report 'Unseen Europe' led to the adoption on 21 March 2005 of a resolution by the First Chamber of Parliament (Upper House). This 'Motion Meindertsma', after the Member of Parliament who is also a member of the previously mentioned VROM Council, in fact repeated the VROM Council's pronouncements on the poor attention in the National Spatial Strategy (and other national policy documents) to European matters and asked for better national coordination between sector policies during the process of developing EU policy. This fitted well with the general debate on Dutch EU policy coordination mechanisms. In 2004 the Council for Public Administration issued a report reacting to the government's sceptical attitude towards European integration and the lack of proactive coordination and involvement by Parliament (RoB, 2004). The influential Social and Economic Council addressed the issue of the impact of EU environmental directives and blamed much of the implementation problems on the lack of coordination between departments (SER, 2006).

The Meindertsma Motion resulted in some new positions within DG Spatial Policy with the explicit aim of monitoring sectoral EU policy development and scrutinising it for spatial impacts. While this amounts to the Europeanisation of planning in terms of organisational adaptation, the effects of air quality for planning are much bigger. During the past year many interest groups have issued position papers and all the provinces and many municipalities have developed local air quality programmes. Also, as we have seen, this has affected the highest political level, with the junior minister Van Geel voting at the EU Environment Council against the new air quality thresholds and starting a lobby for compulsory soot filters.

Air quality is, however, not the only EU policy that influences Dutch planning. Apart from the Habitat and Nitrate Directives, EU competition policy and the regulations on procurement and state aid in particular have had a large impact (Korthals Altes, 2006). Similarly, in the field of food safety the Europe-

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6 Note, however, that these losses should be balanced against costs in terms of healthcare and lower life expectancies due to exposure to poor air, which are estimated at about € 4.5 billion per year.

an Commission acts increasingly as a territorial actor during crises, such as for example in the cases of BSE, Classical Swine Fever, or bird flu (Lezaun & Groenleer, 2006). In contrast to this, the EU Water Framework Directive forms a more promising example of EU policy development in which the territorial dimension has been taken into account from the start. Currently DG Spatial Policy works with a list of over 20 EU policies 'in the making' that it tries to follow and influence.

8.6 Conclusion

During decades of proactive participation in the European spatial planning debate, Dutch national spatial planning has experienced several episodes of Europeanisation. Some episodes have been characterised by acceleration, others by stagnation or even worse. Over time the Netherlands has experienced – and continues to experience – all three types of Europeanisation as distinguished by Lenschow (2006).

Horizontal Europeanisation, expressed through spatial positioning exercises as well as attempts to develop forms of transnational cooperation, has obviously been the most dominant type. Arguably, the main driver behind this process are the 'ideas' regarding the more abstract notion of European integration as well as the development of a European or transnational spatial planning discourse stressing cross-border spatial relationships in a northwest European megalopolis. Whilst these ideas have been very persistent in the minds of Dutch planning experts, they generally seem to lack persistence, as many attempts have been unsuccessful.

The Europeanisation of planning as a result of cyclical processes has played a relatively minor role within the Netherlands. This is demonstrated by the difficulty to apply the ESDP, due to opposing views of sector departments. This is rather ironic given that the Netherlands has played a key role in the development of ESDP. Application of the non-binding ESDP also mainly relies on the persuasive power of its concepts and principles, or in other words, its ideas. Whereas the ideas have been appealing to other countries (Nordregio, 2007), they have not convinced the key stakeholders in Dutch national planning. This is mainly because the ideas were considered to be already part of existing policies, or were seen as outdated and no longer in line with the dominant planning discourse, or because they were found to be too abstract to be of help for solving policy problems.

Yet, the impact of INTERREG IIC, which originated from the ESDP process, and contributed in part to the set-up of the International Affairs Unit, may also account for cyclical processes of Europeanisation. The resources that came with the INTERREG programme clearly accelerated these developments. In terms of resources, as Buunk (2003) notes, attention must also be drawn

to the TEN policies, which combine financial with conceptual elements and have triggered large domestic investments in high-speed railways. For reasons already indicated, EU regional policy plays less of a role in the Netherlands as the country is too wealthy in comparison and its principles run counter to Dutch spatial-economic policies (Zonneveld & Waterhout, 2007). This explains the implicit motivation for the Netherlands to invest in the ESDP process in order to alter the discourse on Structural Funds allocation in favour of stimulating Europe's competitiveness and thus, according to Dutch planners, the stronger regions in the EU.

The last episode of Europeanisation, then, refers to the top-down processes in which rules form the main driving force. Up until now this has been the most forceful example of Europeanisation leading to heavy political involvement. It could be argued that all of the three driving forces as suggested by Healey (2006), i.e. rules, resources and ideas, have influenced processes of Europeanisation in the Netherlands. However, the balance between these has shifted from time to time. Whereas the first episode is largely characterised by 'uploading' Dutch ideas to the EU level, the second episode is marked by a retreat from Europe, which can be understood in terms of conflicting domestic and EU ideas and the 'net-payer' position of the Netherlands. Moreover it transpires that it was not easy to translate 'Europe' into the National Spatial Strategy and that in general the majority of national planners have only limited interest for Europe in relation to planning issues, with their planning considerations often not even stretching beyond the regional scale. Both episodes can also be understood from the perspective of the promise of receiving more EU resources. The third episode clearly differs from the other two as this is driven primarily by European rules that rather unexpectedly impacted upon domestic spatial planning practices.

However, perhaps the most important message is that the various episodes show that the pace of Europeanisation is primarily determined at the domestic level. It largely depends on the unique national characteristics, for example in terms of governance, as well as the prevailing political discourse and dominant policy issues, which are always defined bottom-up.

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9 Institutionalising European spatial planning

Introduction to Chapter 9

Chapter 9 is entirely new and written for the purpose of this book to draw all the chapters together, and to bring in some papers from outside this book. It aims to shed light on the current state of affairs as regards the institutionalisation of European spatial planning. It is written in parallel to Chapter 1, whose questions it tries to answer. The chapter finishes with an outlook into the nearby and somewhat further off future.

European Spatial Planning has undoubtedly become further institutionalised since the ESDP. The question is, however, to what extent it has become institutionalised, whether this is satisfactory for those involved and what the prospects are. This concluding chapter will answer these questions on the basis of the previous chapters complemented by some additional empirical material such as the Territorial Agenda and results from the ESPON 2.3.1 project in which the author was involved (see also: Stead & Waterhout, 2008). Firstly European spatial planning's self-organisation will be emphasised, then its external enforcement.

9.1   The European planning community

As has become clear, the European spatial planning discourse is carried by the ESDP, the Territorial Agenda of the EU (TA), its background document the Territorial State and Perspectives of the EU (TSP), the ESPON and INTERREG IIIB programmes. Also some of the European Commission documents like the Cohesion Reports and Community Strategic Guidelines, or parts of it, produce and reproduce this discourse, just as resolutions of the European Parliament and Committee of the Regions do. On top of that there are numerous statements and position papers on European spatial planning (or issues related to it) by a variety of stakeholders operating at a variety of scales.

9.1.1   Actors and their roles

All involved stakeholders and actors, including those who carry out ESPON and INTERREG IIIB projects, are considered part of the European spatial planning network (which is not the same as the planning community). Defined in these broad terms the network is a rather amorphous mass, especially when taking into account the over 6,500 participants in INTERREG IIIB projects (Ahlke *et al.*, 2007). With such numbers the only way to answer the questions above is through conceptualising the network from various perspectives. Here it seems apposite to apply three different perspectives: (1) a role-oriented perspective, (2) a planning community perspective and (3) a discourse perspective.

   When distinguishing between different roles of actors it becomes fairly easy to conceptualise the network. Basically it can be argued that those actors that are part of one of the managing committees in the Territorial Agenda process, INTERREG and ESPON are in the driving seat. In other words, as indicated in Chapter 2, it concerns member state and DG Regio representatives of the former Committee on Spatial Development (CSD), the subsequent Spatial and Urban Development sub-committee (SUD) or the current, as from early 2007, expert committee Territorial Cohesion and Urban Matters (TCUM) which

was established by the Committee of the Coordination of Funds (COCOF). It also includes the DG-Meetings and Coming Presidencies Group (CPG) that, as discussed in Chapter 6, drafted the Territorial Agenda as well as the monitoring and steering committees of INTERREG IIIB programme areas (see Chapter 7) and the ESPON programme (see Chapter 4). Because many of these committees overlap, in reality this comes down to a handful of officials from each member state and from DG Regio, with a minister (or European Commissioner) or a high-ranked civil servant at the top. If this is considered to form an inner circle, the participants in ESPON and INTERREG projects as well as lobbyists and other interested parties can be considered to form the outer circle of the European spatial planning network. Members of the European Parliament and Committee of the Regions form an in-between category as their opinions have formal status.

9.1.2 The European planning community

When the network is conceptualised from a planning community perspective a different and more complex picture emerges. Planning (or policy) communities rather than networks indicate a closer bond between those who are part of it. What unifies the actors forming a planning community is the shared conviction that spatial planning as a political concern and as a professional discipline matters at the EU level.

The actors forming the planning community are not necessarily concentrated in the inner circle as observed above. Many of the actors participating in one of the mentioned committees are not planners (i.e. many officials are from national departments for economic development or the interior) and, although this is not necessarily correlated, do not approach issues from a spatial development perspective. Some sit there for a different purpose, like gatekeeping, staying informed or, in some cases, just because none of their colleagues wanted to go (Börzel, 2002). Committees do also, however, remain the place where concerned planners can be found. In particular, delegations from member states such as Germany, France, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark, Finland and Austria and more recently also Portugal, Slovenia and Hungary show above average interest and develop initiatives. This is also true for DG Regio, which, however, is internally fragmented and in which the dedicated officials still form a minority. This situation is unlikely to change now that the influential deputy DG (who as from the mid-1990s safeguarded the ESDP process) has retired and has been replaced by a non-territorial thinker.

Strong advocates of EU planning can be found in the outer circles, too. Consider, for example, the European Parliament and Committee of the Regions but also the actors taking part in INTERREG and ESPON projects as well as relative outsiders which may be found in lobby groups, the media and the academic world. For example, the European Council of Spatial Planners has

prepared and submitted a position paper on a draft version of the Territorial Agenda and Territorial State and Perspectives and so have many others, including, together with colleagues, the present author.[1] Unfortunately, the various comments and position papers have not been made public on the website,[2] thereby losing an opportunity for debate and the exchange of views among a wider circle of stakeholders.

The European planning community is thus a rather heterogeneous collection of actors that is loosely organised at best and therefore hard to define exactly. As explained in Chapter 1 the external enforcement of planning, in terms of being recognised as an agent as well as structure, is to a great extent related to the community's internal coherence, both in terms of organisation and substantive ideas. With regard to the latter it can be noted that those who are part of the planning community share the conviction that planning matters, but do not necessarily share ideas on how the EU territory should be treated and what planning involves.

9.1.3 Discourse coalitions

The planning community heterogeneity can be further explained by the fact that it is divided into several sub-communities. As became clear in Chapter 3 one part of the community advocates a cohesion perspective and the other a competitiveness perspective. In Chapter 5 this was further explored in terms of discourse coalitions and storylines, with the major separation line being between the storylines 'Europe in balance' and 'competitive Europe'. In Chapter 5 two other storylines, 'coherent European policy' and 'green and clean Europe' were also identified, but they cause less polarisation as both receive wide support, albeit mostly only passive.

As has become clear, the storylines influencing European planning reflect the current social and political debates about Europe's future. This is clearly the case with the discourse coalitions fostering the storylines 'Europe in balance' and 'Competitive Europe' (see Chapter 5), which dominate the current ideological debate in the EU about which model of society to adopt for future EU policy making (Faludi, 2007a). The vast coalitions behind these storylines include policymakers of many sectors up to the highest European and national politicians including prime ministers and heads of states, the president of the European Commission, Manuel Barosso, as well as many other members of society in general such as journalists, pressure groups, academ-

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1 A TU Delft/OTB Research Institute position paper was prepared by Vincent Nadin (who held a position as guest researcher), Andreas Faludi, Wil Zonneveld, Dominic Stead and myself and submitted on 29 September 2006 to territorial-agenda-eu@bmvbs.bund.de.

2 http://www.bmvbs.de/territorial-agenda.

ics, trade unions and employers' organisations. Planning only forms a sub-theme in these debates, if at all.

Similarly, planners also form a sub-group of the discourse coalition supporting the 'coherent European policies' storyline. This discourse coalition is, however, less prominent in political debates as professionals dominate it. Here, more than with other storylines, the planners' professional skills seem to be recognised. For example, the white paper on governance (CEC, 2001) made reference to the ESDP. As regards the fourth storyline, 'green and clean Europe', planners have a less clear contribution to make and just form a modest share of its discourse coalition. Currently, the storyline is less dominating, but with the recent attention for climate change and the lack of energy resources its political profile is increasing. Up until now, however, solutions have been sought in technical innovations rather than in a spatial approach.

9.2   The European planning discourse

Can we, given the above, still speak of any such thing as a European spatial planning discourse? If anything, it has become clear that the planning community, as undefined and complex as it may be, has not been able to develop any clear indications of how planning at the European level could and should look like. The planning community itself is relatively weakly organised, lacks formal status and is fragmented in its thinking. Having few resources at its disposal it has to link several storylines together, in particular those on cohesion and competitiveness. Yet, driven by the shared ambition to raise attention for the spatial dimension in EU policies, it managed to issue in 1999 the ESDP and in 2007 the Territorial Agenda (TA, 2007) and its background document the Territorial State and Perspectives (TSP, 2007). Whilst not being completely consistent and coherent, these documents provide a good idea of how the European spatial planning discourse has developed and what it entails.

Following Böhme's ideas on discursive integration, the shaping of a discourse is a cyclical process in which national planning discourses inspire the European planning discourse and vice versa (Böhme, 2002). Similarly, the transnational project groups carrying out ESPON or INTERREG IIIB projects reproduce and recreate the discourse, too. On the other hand, as Chapter 7 shows for INTERREG IIIB, the process of reproducing discourse is not linear and goes through several rounds of interpretation and reinterpretation in order to meet local requirements. This means that the European spatial planning discourse translated differently in different places and at different levels.

Although the production and reproduction of discourse is often regarded as a cyclical process, in the case of European spatial planning this is only true to a certain extent. Amongst others this is due to weakly developed feedback and consultation systems. For example, local interpretations of the European

spatial planning discourse in INTERREG projects are barely transmitted back to the makers of for example the Territorial Agenda. Similarly, as regards the consultation system around the Territorial Agenda, it can be noted that significantly less effort has been spent on involving stakeholders than during the ESDP process.

9.2.1 Conceptualising the EU territory

As indicated in Chapter 1, storylines can be broken down into spatial concepts and planning principles. Spatial concepts, in turn, can be broken down into conceptualisations of the territory and concepts indicating desired future spatial development. The ESDP developed two storylines: one concerning planning principles, more notably the 'spatial approach' that will be discussed below, and one concerning the conceptualisation of the EU territory in terms of a centre and a periphery and its desired polycentric development. These storylines remain cornerstones in the Territorial Agenda and are further elaborated.

As has been described in Chapter 3, in the 1990s the centre-periphery conceptualisation of the EU territory was accepted pretty quickly. This, however, was not the case with the more complex cohesion-competitiveness issue. This issue was circumvented by invoking the concepts of 'harmonious and balanced development' (Zonneveld, 2000) and, most notably, the concept of 'polycentric development', which in the ESDP translated into the desire to develop so-called Global Economic Integration Zones to counterbalance the dominant centre (see Chapter 3 and also: Davoudi, 2003; Zonneveld *et al.*, 2005). Thanks to these bridging concepts, the conceptualisation of the EU territory in terms of a centre and periphery (that had to change) became politically acceptable and even made it into the ESDP by means of the 'pentagon'. The two enlargements, adding 12 new member states to the EU, made the issue of conceptualisation even more apparent. In the EU-27 the pentagon still accounts for 46.5% of the GDP, produced by one third of the population on just 14% of the territory (TSP, 2007).

The pentagon concept still figures in texts but has been renamed as simply the European 'core area' (TSP, 2007: 15). At the same time it has lost some of its political and explanatory power. Due to ESPON research the EU territory is being increasingly conceptualised in more subtle terms. For example, the third ESPON synthesis report speaks of an 'enlarged pentagon' with Manchester, Paris, Genoa, Venice and Berlin as its cornerstones (ESPON 2006). Furthermore, the TSP emphasises that "..in terms of economic performance and in particular with relation to the Lisbon aims (…) the Northern parts of Europe are on an equal footing with the core and even outperform the core on some indicators" (TSP, 2007: 13). It also highlights the relative wealth (measured in terms of GDP in Purchasing Power Standards) of regions such as Rome, Lisbon,

Madrid, Athens as well as Budapest, Bratislava and Prague in the new member states, whilst the importance of medium-sized cities like Valencia, Gothenburg, Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius, Cork and Seville is also recognised. In ESPON terminology such cities or city regions are referred to as strong, potential or weak MEGA's (Metropolitan European Growth Area), as well as PUSH areas (Potential Urban Strategic Horizons) (ESPON 1.1.1/Nordregio 2006; ESPON, 2005). Moreover, it is assumed that the best conditions for performing in terms of the Lisbon aims can be found in Northern and Central Europe, and that economic growth has been much higher in the former cohesion countries Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Greece as well as in the capital regions of the new member states where growth rates of above 10% a year have been reported. The Commission's Fourth Cohesion Report (CEC, 2007a), too, observes a trend of reducing disparities between the pentagon, to which it explicitly refers, and surrounding areas. Interestingly, it also observes a growing dominance of national capital regions, which, except for Berlin, increased their already dominant economic position in their respective countries between 1995 and 2004. Although the report itself does not attempt to further conceptualise the EU territory, a picture may emerge of capital regions forming islands of economic growth in the EU territory.

What this means is that in comparison to the ESDP the EU territory is now being approached in a more diversified way, taking more and different indicators on board. In so doing, it is accepted that the EU territory is not easy to comprehend. Consequently, one of the key conclusions is that there is no standard recipe for success, but "...that the reasons for a prosperous region can be manifold" (TSP, 2007: 19). Due to the global networks in which companies increasingly take part, those reasons sometimes even have to be looked for outside the EU. In general, the conclusion is that since the ESDP a huge amount of learning has taken place, but also that, unlike the ESDP, new policy documents such as the Territorial Agenda refrain from invoking EU-wide spatial conceptualisations.

9.2.2 Desired spatial development

Polycentric development was the key concept of the ESDP. Yet, as ESPON project 1.1.1 shows, rendering the concept concrete proved less easy than had been assumed. Also, as was observed in Chapter 5, polycentric development became more connoted to cohesion, which is why, when the Dutch presidency started to link spatial planning to the Lisbon Agenda in 2004, it went out of use. However, nothing is as unpredictable as politics and so, two years later, there was a revival of the concept of polycentricity that, on the instigation of the Central and East European member states, now figures prominently in both the Territorial Agenda and TSP.

As Chapters 4 and 5 indicate, a new concept with potential binding pow-

er emerged: territorial capital. Inspired by the OECD's Territorial Outlook (OECD, 2001), the concept was introduced in the run up to the Dutch presidency (SUD, 2003). Basically the concept refers to the endogenous potential of regions, something that had already figured in the ESDP. Territorial capital plays a dominant role in the Dutch and Luxembourg presidency documents and is regarded as the contribution of spatial planning to the revived Lisbon Agenda. Surprisingly, the concept that primarily seemed to appeal to member states adhering to the 'competitive Europe' storyline was in fact welcomed by all delegations (Waterhout, 2007). However, despite two ESPON synthesis reports with telling names as *In search of territorial potential* and *Territory matters for competitiveness and cohesion* (ESPON, 2005; 2006), the member states did not succeed in elaborating the concept and rendering it more concrete. And whilst the term territorial capital figures prominently in several sections of the TSP, it therefore is not included in the Territorial Agenda, or at least not under this name. Territorial capital does appear in the Territorial Agenda, however, disguised as 'regional potential', which is used as a mere synonym (Waterhout, 2007). What this means is that the 'Europe in balance' storyline as identified in Chapter 5 is now balanced by the 'competitive Europe' storyline. The makers of the Territorial Agenda, however, have not yet found a way to integrate them into one convincing storyline.

The Territorial Agenda also searches for new directions in which spatial planning may play a role. Examples of such directions are climate change, energy resources and uneven territorial opportunities, demographic change and the possible occurrence of natural hazards. Obviously, these directions are inspired by current events and political debates. The assumption underlying this is that once such a topic really takes off and planning can be proven to make a contribution, the political profile of planning will rise. At the moment, however, with the exception of natural hazards to which considerable attention has been paid in the ESPON 2006 programme, such proof is not to be found. Given the relative newness of the topics, the limited resources of the planning community and the inflexibility of the ESPON programme (Hague & Hachmann, 2008), it is not surprising that the Territorial Agenda has not really integrated them. It is clear that the planning discourse still needs to develop on these issues. Nevertheless, this strategic move seems promising in terms of institutional design and making use of critical moments (Buitelaar *et al.*, 2007).

9.2.3 Planning principles

As indicated, a second storyline of the ESDP concerns the 'spatial approach'. This concept refers to a collection of planning principles regarding the way spatial policies should be developed and carried out, i.e. through collaboration and co-operation with relevant stakeholders, as well as the relation be-

tween spatial and sector policies, the latter of which should take note of their spatial effects. These principles can be generally applied at all administrative levels.

Instead of using 'spatial approach', the Territorial Agenda and Territorial State and Perspectives invoke a new umbrella term: 'territorial governance'. Rather than proposing to follow an approach (or suggesting doing so), territorial governance is merely presented as a challenge. This challenge not only involves coping with the territorial impact of EU policies but also aims to "integrate the territorial dimension in EU and national policies" instead of "creating a top-down and separate EU territorial cohesion policy" (TSP, 2007: 9). Territorial governance is based on four principles: "(a) integration, i.e. building on the ESDP, (b) no new procedures or rules but better use of existing possibilities, (c) subsidiarity, and (d) facilitating development and thus supporting efficiency in achieving cohesion" (p. 9). Similar to the ESDP, the most important instruments of this governance method are dialogue and communication. To indicate the scope of the European planning discourse, the TSP notes "…spatial development is more than territorial cohesion" (p. 9). Clearly, just as with the ESDP's spatial approach, territorial governance has a broader aim than just territorial cohesion.

Whereas territorial governance refers to planning principles in general, the focus of the Territorial Agenda has shifted to the regions. Since the ESDP, the planning community has become more aware of its institutional position and subsequently more realistic in terms of the strings that it can pull. Whereas the ESDP boldly spoke of developing global economic integration zones to counterbalance the dominant pentagon area, the TA and TSP focus on the development of existing regions and modestly speak of investigating possibilities for transnational clustering based on synergies and complementarities. In the spirit of territorial governance this is, however, considered primarily a task for the regions themselves who should make use of their territorial capital. In fact, despite a small hiccup during the debate about the Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 when DG Regio stipulated the idea of 'trans-European structuring projects' (see Chapter 6), the TA considers regions as the main variable in processes of European spatial development. Except for the obvious examples such as river basins and the Alpine space, there is little talk about territorial structures at a transnational or EU scale.

9.2.4 Evidence-based planning

Another new planning principle concerns the idea that policy contents should be based on reliable data and knowledge, or in short, that it should be evidence-based. Some disappointing experiences with the application of the ESDP, both at the EU and sometimes at national level, led the ministers to adopt a new approach to policy making, coined 'evidence-based policy'. Evidence-

based policy refers to the idea that policy choices and objectives should have their source in 'hard' scientific evidence. This should provide the ministers responsible for spatial development with a stronger position *vis-à-vis* their colleagues and the European Commission. Policy makers emphasise that, if they want to convince policy makers from other DG's or national sectors, they need hard evidence 'on the spot', something that the ESDP clearly failed to deliver. As a consequence, as Chapter 6 indicates, the TA and TSP are coined evidence-based policy documents, with ESPON delivering the evidence. The ESPON 2006 programme itself is based on a research model dominated by the effort to quantify spatial patterns and processes, including in cases where this approach is not very relevant (Hague & Hachmann, 2008).

Despite the policy makers' enthusiasm, it is difficult to conceive a fully evidence-based policy. The idea seems to be grounded in a positivist rather than a constructivist view of science. For this reason it was concluded that policy making can only get as far as being 'evidence informed', and not evidence-based (Davoudi, 2006). The strict application of the principle has led to some odd situations when policy makers asked ESPON research groups for scientific results 'on demand', something which has raised some eyebrows among academics (Gløersen *et al.*, 2007; Bengs, 2006; Prezioso, 2007; see also Chapter 4).

9.3 Has planning become further institutionalised?

As indicated in Chapter 1 an agent's transformative capacity depends on its self-organisation and embeddedness in the wider context. Balancing these perspectives against the three indicators of institutions (rules, resources and ideas) results in a picture of the current state of affairs.

9.3.1 Self-organisation

As regards self-organisation, or self-organising capacity, the discussion above indicates that there is something left to be desired. Compared to established policy communities, the still developing European planning community is weakly organised, has few resources at its disposal and is divided in its thinking. Yet, in difficult circumstances it has nevertheless shown a fair amount of self-organising capacity. For example, after DG Regio decided in 2000 to no longer pay for the travel expenses of member state representatives meeting in the CSD, those members of the CSD belonging to the planning community had to find new platforms to meet, which they found in the Mermaid group (Eser & Schmeitz, 2008). Whereas DG Regio compensated the loss of the CSD with the set-up of the SUD, which has been followed by the TCUM in 2007, its main objective was to 'normalise' the committee to a standard comitology

committee (see Chapter 2) and to take over the chair from the member states. Although initially the SUD was not a success, the planning community has undoubtedly gained a firmer institutional position through the establishment of the formal SUD and TCUM committees.

In terms of self-organisation, however, the making of the Territorial Agenda should be considered a major feat. The member states demonstrated that they are able to produce discourse without the Commission. Yet, as we have seen, because of a general lack of resources, the process is vulnerable and depends on just a few member states that are able and willing to invest in European spatial planning. This became clear, for example, from the consultation round. Whereas originally all member states were to organise national conferences, in the end only one stakeholders conference was organised on the 26th of June 2006 in Amsterdam. To make up for the failings of the consultation round, representatives of the Coming Presidency's Group presented drafts of the Territorial Agenda to about fifteen different interest groups (Eser & Schmeitz, 2008).

On other levels there have been some clear gains. For example, a joint effort of DG Regio and the member states (both financing 50%) has launched the ESPON programme. It will continue from 2007-2013 with a budget three times the size, which does, however, have to cover six instead of four years. In so doing, next to the ongoing territorial agenda process, ESPON 2013 is becoming a second organisational 'anchor' for the planning community. In addition to that the ESPON 2013 programme has a different set-up allowing more flexibility to respond to new issues.

Some will argue the same for INTERREG IIIB, which is now becoming mainstreamed under the European Territorial Cooperation objective (ETC) of the structural funds, but will continue as INTERREG IV along the same principles. While this does, indeed, mean a more solid institutional basis and future perspective, with the progression from INTERREG IIC, to INTERREG IIIB and now INTERREG IV, the focus has shifted to a regional development discourse at the expense of the spatial dimension. Also, as Chapter 7 shows, participants in INTERREG IIIB projects are barely aware of the ESDP's existence, or the framework of European spatial planning in general. Therefore, the question should be raised as to what extent the planning community is still able to influence INTERREG IV and, indeed, whether INTERREG IV can still be regarded as forming part of the European spatial planning discourse?

9.3.2 Embeddedness in EU and member state politics

From an external perspective the picture looks a bit different. What matters is whether the European spatial planning discourse has become more firmly embedded in EU politics. One indication for this is the extent to which EU stakeholders are applying the ESDP, being the main carrier of the discourse.

This has amongst others been analysed in the ESPON 2.3.1 project where it was found that, except for DG Regio which is part of the community, other DG's welcomed the ESDP, but did not find it very useful because of its abstractness (ESPON 2.3.1/Nordregio 2007). Moreover, DG Regio, which still has limited human resources for spatial issues, has not been able to increase its influence over other Directorate-Generals. The European Parliament, on the other hand, has clearly shown its support with the Guellec resolution (see Chapter 2), as did the Committee of the Regions.

Whereas the influence of the ESDP has been fairly minimal at the EU level, it has aroused quite some interest in most member states. This is the outcome of the ESPON 2.3.1 project, which analysed the application of the ESDP in member states (ESPON 2.3.1/Nordregio *et al.*, 2007). In particular, the ESDP has been influential in member states where there was no true spatial planning policy. Not only has the ESDP influenced the development of planning policies at a national level, but in some cases also at a regional level. Nevertheless, the ESDP's influence has remained limited in the sense that, generally speaking, only spatial planners were inspired by it.

This is unfortunate for European spatial planning since national representatives of sector policies dominate EU decision-making processes, including the development of spatially relevant EU legislation in, for example, the field of the environment. Moreover, to effectuate their agreements the ministers responsible for spatial planning and development have to go back to their national cabinets and parliaments. However, as ESPON project 2.3.1 shows for Europe and Chapter 8 for the Netherlands in particular, the generally weak position of planning *vis-à-vis* sector interests in most member states has not improved much due to the ESDP. As regards the regions within member states, it can be noted that in general they took notice of the ESDP, but because of its abstractness did not change their policies. In light of this the emphasis in the Territorial Agenda on the regions seems a bit awkward and, although understandable from the perspective of influencing DG Regio's interpretation of territorial cohesion policy, rather an example of the wish being the father of the thought.

9.3.3 Résumé

On balance, whilst a lot has happened since the ESDP, the institutional position of European spatial planning has not changed dramatically. Internally, the planning community showed quite some resilience, indicating a powerful will to survive and a determination to successfully integrate a territorial dimension in EU politics. In particular, the set-up of the ESPON programme, which brings stability and reasonable resources, forms an important step ahead. Externally, however, the position of the planning community has not changed much and remains marginal. Whereas planners in member states increasingly recognise the ESDP and in particular the results from ESPON as a

structure, this is generally not the case for national policy sectors. Also at the EU level European spatial planning is barely recognised as an agent.

9.4 A changing context

Whereas the impact of European spatial planning on the outside world is still limited, the political context itself is changing and may increasingly put pressure on existing institutions to adopt a more territorial approach. One of these trends concerns the ongoing Europeanisation of planning. This was discussed in Chapter 8 with regard to the Netherlands, but it has also taken place in various ways in other member states. Secondly, although the effects of the ESDP itself have not been great, within the European Commission a trend can be discerned that more attention is being paid to territorial issues. Thirdly, some help may come from unexpected places outside the realm of the European Union.

9.4.1 The Europeanisation of planning

The Europeanisation of planning, interpreted as the influence of the EU on domestic planning policies and practices, is increasingly becoming an important issue. Whereas Chapter 8 reveals one prominent source for Europeanisation of planning, i.e. EU sector policies causing spatial impacts, Böhme and Waterhout (2008) identify three other sources for Europeanisation as well: the ESDP and the European spatial planning discourse itself (as described above), transnational co-operation through INTERREG and the European integration process.

Transnational co-operation through INTERREG IIC and IIIB, as analysed in Chapter 7, leads to the Europeanisation of planning as it creates processes of what has been called organisational learning, or just learning as such (Böhme, 2005). Although the rather weak (top-down) performance of ESDP messages in INTERREG cooperation may suggest otherwise, INTERREG should in particular be understood in terms of facilitating horizontal learning between actors, mostly regions, meeting and co-operating with each other in transnational project groups. Many authors reported on knowledge exchange and the exchange of best practices (Dühr *et al.*, 2007; Colomb, 2007).

The European integration process as such inspires domestic planners, be they national, regional or local, to develop new practices, most notably spatial positioning and cross-border co-operation. Spatial positioning refers to the capacity of a planning administration to view its own territory in a wider spatial context and to identify spatial structures and relations (Williams 1996). Currently, many national, regional and even local spatial planning documents include a chapter or section that reflects on the territory's position in a wider transnational or European context. Also, increasing cross-border and transna-

tional co-operation between regions can be observed. Interestingly, research by De Vries (2004, 2006) reveals that many forms of cross-border co-operation take place outside the realm of INTERREG, the administrative requirements of which are considered too much of a burden. Also many cross-border issues and projects concern large investments and require massive political negotiations between governments for which INTERREG does not form an appropriate environment (Vries, 2008).

A final source concerns the already mentioned top-down influence of EU directives and regulations. Impacts concern both spatial development and spatial planning practices. Mostly, transposing EU policies into national legislation only results in gradual changes that are barely noticed. However, as Chapter 8 shows for the Netherlands, there are some examples where the spatial impact of EU policies is causing real pain. Slovenia is a case in point as it has allocated one third of its total territory to the Natura 2000 network (EEA, 2005). Note, however, that, as is the case with the Netherlands and Slovenia, problems often result from the way a member state transposes EU regulations into national legislation (Peterlin & Kreitmeyer McKenzie, 2007).

The effects of these processes of Europeanisation are hard to estimate. What is quite clear though, is that they will not lead to a harmonisation of planning systems and policies. This is due to the heterogeneity of the member states in terms of their territories and government and governance structures, which results in different processes and translations of EU influence. Yet, Europeanisation may lead to more confluence between domestic planning policies and systems. This, in turn, may lead to better mutual understanding between member states and thus within the European planning community.

9.4.2 Spatialising EU policies

Despite the pessimistic tone that can be found throughout this and other chapters as regards the application of the ESDP within the DG's, there are nevertheless some interesting developments happening within the European Commission that may be favourable for planning.

As we saw in Chapter 6, DG Regio chose to go its own way (i.e. without the member states) as regards territorial cohesion, which did not change when the Constitution was voted down. Amongst others this resulted in the Community Strategic Guidelines – Cohesion Policy in Support of Growth and Jobs (CEC, 2006) that includes a chapter on the territorial dimension of cohesion policy, to which the member states had to respond in their National Strategic Reference Frameworks (NSRF), something that, however, hardly happened. Amongst other examples (see Faludi, 2006), the *Fourth Cohesion Report* (CEC, 2007a) bears further proof of the Commission continuing its track as regards territorial cohesion, which it, however, still has not rendered more concrete. This to the annoyance of the member states that, with the Territorial Agenda,

wanted to send a message to the Commission that clarity was needed on this issue, something they would be eager to help with.

Another example of the Commission paying increasing attention to territorial issues concerns the structural funds themselves. As a result of UK insistence during the negotiations in 2005 on the Financial Perspectives 2007-2013, a thorough evaluation of the structural funds as well as Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is scheduled for 2008. With this in mind the structural funds have already become more focused on growth and jobs, whilst the CAP is increasingly shifting focus from direct income support (pillar 1) towards rural development (pillar 2). These new directions in combination with the foreseen territorial strand in cohesion policy may hold a promise for territorial aspects. But also from the perspective of effective cohesion policy there is more attention for territory, in particular in relation to territorial coherence with other EU policies. In fact, looking at the three Structural Funds periods 1994-1999, 2000-2006 and 2007-2013, Bachtler and Polverari (2007) identify a clear shift towards addressing territorial issues. They illustrate the emergence of a more spatial and urban focus in the Structural Funds regulations, which can also be seen by looking more deeply into the individual programmes and the activities funded by them.

Thirdly, as was found in the ESPON 2.3.1 study, a more autonomous trend seems to have emerged within the European Commission, or parts thereof, to increasingly integrate territorial concerns into policies (ESPON 2.3.1/Nordregio *et al.*, 2007; see also: Stead & Waterhout, 2008). An indication for this trend concerns the internal guidelines for impact assessment that clearly specify that assessment should consider 'the geographical distribution of effects' using various qualitative and quantitative techniques (CEC, 2005a). As indicated in Chapter 4, planners can better focus on the possibilities of this Integrated Assessment, than on developing an altogether new and separate Territorial Impact Assessment instrument. Other examples illustrating the Commission's overall increasing attention towards territorial issues concern various policies, such as the Water Framework Directive (2000) that explicitly refers to the ESDP, or the Regulation on Rural Development (CEC, 2005b), or the green paper on an Integrated Maritime Policy (CEC, 2007b) which talks about "maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management" (p. 6). So, even without the traceable influence of the European planning community, a trend is emerging to integrate spatial considerations in EU policies.

9.4.3 Unexpected help?

In the meantime, outside the realm of the European Commission and even the European Union there may be other forces catalysing the institutionalisation of the European spatial planning discourse. Noteworthy in this respect are the reports by influential and well-respected organisations such as the Or-

ganisation for Economic and Co-operation and Development (2001; 2006), the European Environmental Agency (2006) and the World Health Organisation (2005; Edwards & Tsouros, 2006) emphasising, respectively, the role of territory for economic development, the negative impact of urban sprawl on the environment and the importance of urban design for physical health. While such reports have their own effects in terms of discourse production, planners should see them as further helpful support and draw inspiration from them. Obviously, as Chapter 4 points out, they did so with the OECD report Territorial Outlook 2001 introducing the concept of territorial capital. However, since their publication at the end of 2006 the EEA and WHO reports have not been taken on board in the planning debate, which may indicate a lack of interaction between different policy communities. Planning could raise its profile if it could convincingly show its added value to the issues addressed by the reports, which are grounded in powerful environmental storylines stressing the need for a good environment in order to save human lives.

9.5 A roadmap

The question now is how can the trends and opportunities above, if they come true, be further accelerated and used by the planning community? The answer simply lies in being at the right place at the right time and, not unimportantly, doing the right thing. In theoretical terms this has been referred to with transformative capacity and the community's ability to gain societal recognition, trust and legitimacy, and the capacity for institutional reflection (Buitelaar *et al*., 2007).

The largest challenge is to become more outward looking and active. Over the past eighteen years planners have been concerned with drafting the ESDP, setting up and monitoring INTERREG and ESPON, drafting the Territorial Agenda and above all, with creating consensus within the planning community. Obviously, there were good reasons to do so and, given the shortage of resources (in particular in terms of personnel), there was hardly any other option. However, apart from regional policy, this has not led to different policies where it matters: at the EU level. Now, with the Territorial Agenda out and ESPON II getting into gear, a new phase in the institutionalisation of European spatial planning has begun. This phase will be characterised by the need to prove the added value of European spatial planning in solving policy problems and delivering sustainable and durable spatial solutions, which is clearly a far more daunting task. So, which way should the planning community go? Whereas there is no simple recipe, one can conceive of at least three ways that create momentum: (1) continuing the Territorial Agenda process and ESPON, (2) starting-up a grass-roots process, (3) creating or hoping for a shock.

9.5.1 The Territorial Agenda way

It is logical to keep following the first way, continuing the current process set out by the Territorial Agenda and ESPON. This will help to further develop storylines and the planning community. This way leads to slow but gradual change, of which not too much should be expected in terms of influencing powerful stakeholders in the short term. This is shown by the ESDP that was evaluated, weighed and finally put aside by stakeholders outside the planning realm. The Territorial Agenda elaborates on the ESDP, refines and modifies it, but does not offer a dramatically new perspective. As a consequence, stakeholders will probably not see much difference between the documents. For the planning community, however, they have an important institutional role and function as a frame of reference.

The Territorial Agenda presents a brief agenda for the years to come. It focuses on future EU Presidencies. This is wise, since from the perspective of institutional design, the Presidential terms remain of crucial importance (Héritier, 2007). Throughout the twenty preceding years, the major steps in developing the European spatial planning discourse have always been taken when the Presidency term was in the hands of a committed member state. Looking ahead to the future Presidencies up until 2011 we will see: Slovenia, France, Czech Republic, Sweden, Spain, Belgium, Hungary and Poland. Of this list at least the first two member states are known as advocates of planning. The Slovene Presidency has already announced the bold plan to put the Territorial Agenda on the table of the European Council. This has never happened before and, provided that it will come about, no doubt will be one of the most exciting events that has ever occurred for European spatial planning. However, not too much should be expected from this in terms of instant success and change as this depends on the presence of a critical moment. It may, however, assist in giving rise to such a moment. Hungary, looking forward to its presidency term in the first half of 2011, is already considering evaluating the Territorial Agenda.

Be that as it may, the continuation of ESPON is the best guarantee that European spatial planning will continue to develop and become further institutionalised over the coming programming period. It enables the planning community to elaborate on the current storylines and start to explore new ones. Compared with ESPON 2006, ESPON 2013 will be carried out in such a way that research meets demand in a more direct way. The ESPON results are therefore likely to be of more use for planning practitioners. Through the use of ESPON results by various planning institutions throughout the EU, the Europeanisation of planning will go on.

The value of ESPON may also be reflected upon from a more theoretical perspective in terms of the added value of spatial planning in the longer term. Having considered the instrument of spatial plans and planning documents,

which often do not serve their purpose well, Friedmann concludes that planning's added value should be found in initiating "…in-depth explorations of problems that are both strategic and foreseeable but have no obviously 'best' solution. (…) The object of these studies would not be to produce 'plans' (not even strategic plans), but insights into prospective change and encourage and promote public debates about them." (Friedmann, 2004: 55-56)

Following this line of reasoning, the issue of forming all-embracing consensus within the planning community will become less important, as consensus in such a case would not concern the development of an all-embracing plan or policy agenda, such as the ESDP and TA, but merely concern the selection of topics that have immediate societal and political impact and for that reason should be further explored. This mirrors the messages of recent research, referring to processes of developing transnational spatial planning documents (Zonneveld, 2005; Vries, 2002). Chapter 4 presents ideas about the alternative use and form of spatial visions in such processes. The issues to be selected can range from long-term events such as the spatial effects of climate change and how, through spatial policies, to deal with these, to short term events like natural hazards.

9.5.2 A grass-roots approach

The second way is supposed to be bottom-up. Rather than designing overall policy objectives it is concerned with developing tools and mechanisms that are based on experience and actually put the general objectives into practice. European planners should try to get involved in the spatial development projects in order to test, evaluate and eventually modify their ideas concerning territorial governance. Whilst in many countries this happens already at the local, regional and national scale, planners also need to become involved in projects at a cross-border and transnational scale. The latter, for example, can include the management of river basins or large ecological networks. INTERREG IV can be seen as an example of this, but as Chapter 7 shows, INTERREG projects often deal with single issues instead of complex actor systems and multi-dimensional objectives, which come closer to defining the planners' playground. Moreover, the European spatial planning community hardly benefits from the experiences in INTERREG because of a missing feedback system. Those who belong to the European planning community should turn their eyes to concrete cases where a spatial perspective may help with implementing several policy objectives. The ideas about spatial visioning, as presented in Chapter 4, may serve this purpose.

Obviously, however, this is easier said than done as the networks that form around specific policies or projects often have closed gates, being controlled by stakeholders afraid of losing power. Entering such policy networks depends on many things, including luck and political skill. Moreover, it requires reflec-

tion on planning as a problem-solving discipline delivering durable spatial solutions. Pursuing such a grass-roots path aiming to provide added value to ongoing policy processes, should lead to a wider appreciation of sectoral policy fields for a spatial approach at transnational and EU levels.

9.5.3 Creating a shock?

Whilst the first and second way require medium to long-term attitudes, the third, aiming to create a shock, has a short-term horizon. Until now the only example of a shock that actually benefited the further institutionalisation of planning has been in the Netherlands where, due to mistakes while transposing EU regulation into national legislation, half of all building activity had to stop. As Chapter 8 shows, from an institutional perspective, the effects of such a shock are remarkable. The spatial impact of EU policy had the immediate attention of politicians, up to the highest level, something that concerned officials had not been able to achieve in more than two decades of arguing. Moreover, in order to prevent similar events recurring in the future, organisational measures were taken, including hiring additional staff and an increase in websites delivering practical information regarding EU legislation and legislation in the pipeline.

Following this reasoning, in order to create momentum in the short-term, the European planning community may want to consider developing a politics of creating shocks. Now, the shock above was not created by planners, but by environmental policy makers, unaware of the spatial implications of their take on transposing the Air Quality directive into national legislation. For spatial planners it makes more sense to select a societal issue, as set out above, and present it in a dramatic way, similar to for example Al Gore's documentary on climate change. It would not be the first time that this was successful. In the 1950s Dutch planners convincingly argued the need for restrictive spatial planning policy in order to avoid turning the Randstad into a metaphorical 'sea of houses' or a second Los Angeles (Zonneveld, 2007).

Arguably, there are some drawbacks to this way in terms of feasibility. As indicated in Chapter 1 the outcomes of designing institutions, to which the creative process of creating a shock may be reckoned, are rather unpredictable, meaning that the shock may cause different effects than foreseen. Also it raises the question of whether, albeit for a good reason, it is ethically acceptable or legitimate to create shocks (in the form of undesired situations) on purpose? This question, however, will not be answered here as the purpose of this text is merely to show that, next to the traditional first and the complementary creative second way, there is a third possible way leading to momentum and further institutionalisation.

9.6 Stamina rewarded?

Given the limited institutional and human capacity of the European planning community, it cannot be expected to play simultaneous chess on all boards. So, there is a need for selectivity. Continuing the traditional first way seems evident, pursuing the second or third way has, however, consequences. A first, practical consequence is that both ways require the allocation of extra funds in order to mobilise human resources, both of which are in short supply. A second, more fundamental consequence is the need to reflect on the role of planners in policy processes as well as on what European spatial planning as such entails. Reference works like the ESDP and Territorial Agenda give hints, but no definitive answers. Rather than answering the question of what needs to be done, planners should reflect on how this should be done. Such reflection should take place in the first, traditional way and result in a revised Territorial Agenda which serves as a frame of reference for planners that are active in the second and third way, who through feedback systems also help to shape such an agenda as well as a better organised planning community. Whether the term planning will still be appropriate remains to be seen.

After eighteen years of working on European spatial planning, planners may feel a need for reflection on their activities and achievements anyway. Perhaps, they will be disappointed by the results of their efforts. In terms of the ESDP's own objectives it must indeed be accepted that main addressees such as sector representatives at both the EU and national level have not been touched by the ESDP messages. On the other hand, it has become clear that in hindsight the original ESDP objectives may have been a bit too ambitious. EU policy-making processes are still organised and institutionalised in such a departmentalised way that the ESDP and the spatial approach simply do not fit the system. So, is it any wonder that it did not work as foreseen?

On a positive note, however, the ESDP has led to increasing awareness amongst planners. This in itself is a great achievement. After all, one should not forget that before the ESDP process started many member states did not have any form of spatial planning at a national or even at a regional level. Now, be it a result of the ESDP or not, wherever you look in Europe, regional and national spatial planning documents pop up with a remarkable level of similarity regarding the way that territories are positioned in a wider territorial setting and the proposed spatial concepts aiming to strengthen this spatial position. This is of crucial importance since it is difficult to conceive of European territorial governance (which as from now may be a more appropriate term) without such a practice at the national and regional level. Other achievements concern the adoption of the Territorial Agenda (be it weak or not), the continuation of the ESPON programme, the mainstreaming of INTERREG (be it shifting in focus or not) in the European Territorial Co-operation objective and the increasing extent to which DG Regio allows itself to be

inspired by the spatial planning discourse. Not such a bad score!

What all this tells us in terms of the institutionalisation of a territorial dimension in EU politics is that, slowly but steadily, attention for territorial issues in other circles is growing. While the period between 1999 and 2007 did not see spectacular progress in terms of institutionalisation, undeniably a number of small but important steps have been taken. This is not only due to the planning community, but, interestingly also to intrinsic developments in other policy areas. If this trend continues, storylines, concepts and principles will become more sophisticated, the supporting community larger, more stable and influential. The current EU programming period 2007-2013 will see some important events. The Slovene Presidency will put the Territorial Agenda on the table of the European Council, ESPON 2013 will continue and regional policy and the Common Agricultural Policy will be thoroughly evaluated in 2008. This, and the increasing global attention for environmental issues, the climate, demographic change, natural hazards and the use of energy, as well as the development of the European Union as such, may open up possibilities to further pursue a territorial agenda. Although perhaps to a lesser extent than they would have liked, the stamina of the ESDP and post-ESDP planners has until now always been rewarded. There is no indication that in the near future this will change.

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Epilogue

- Hey Bas, great to see you again!
- Great to see you too! Been quite a while hasn't it?
- Well, some two and a half years or so.
- Yes, something like that I think. Too long anyway.
- Hey, but I got your book! Thanks for sending it, that was really great of you.
- My pleasure! Well, I wasn't really sure whether you really wanted me to send it, or whether it was just out of politeness. You know that we Dutchies take everything quite literally.
- No come on, I really meant it and in fact I have read most of it too!
- You are kidding?
- No, I've read most of it, except for the summary, which I could not read because it is in Dutch.
- So, and what do you think of it?
- Well, it's quite a convincing story and it shows pretty well the development of this field and what kind of challenges it faces.
- Thanks, that is really nice feedback.
- You are welcome. But, and there is always a but, there are some elements which are not really clear to me.
- Like what?
- Well, for example this idea of a European planning community. You refer to it a lot, but you do not really seem to get a grip on it.
- Ha-ha, yes this planning community concept is a tricky one. Theoretically I think it still makes sense, but it is difficult to apply in the actual policy context of the EU. I mean, there are quite a lot of people and agents around who think spatial planning matters at EU level, but they are scattered all over the place and their mutual relationships vary from really close to pretty distant. In fact, it's like some sort of fluid. You think you've got hold of it and then it still slips through your fingers.
- Hmm, is there any other explanation for that?
- Well, one way of explaining it is that the community is continuously changing. No month seems to pass without me receiving emails from people I would consider to be part of the planning community announcing a change of job. Even key people in the process, of which there are not so many, sometimes complain about the always changing network. And then, on top of that, domestic politics and priorities also change every now and then.
- So it still has to grow?
- Yes I think so, although it is not easy to see it growing without spatial plan-

ning becoming more institutionalised. So this is a bit an issue of which comes first: the chicken or the egg.
- Hmm, complicated. Something else that struck me was that although you sketch a pretty clear picture, your research does not seem to be finished.
- No it isn't, you are quite right. The trouble with this sort of topic is indeed that it is never finished. With regard to this particular process the reality is in fact still unclear, even for those who are in the middle of it. It's a train that nobody knows where it's going to and where it will stop.
- But doesn't that make everything very uncertain for you as a researcher?
- Yes, but that is also the fun of it. You never know what will happen and sometimes unexpected events turn earlier ideas into vanity. As a researcher you grow with the situation. For example, Chapter 6, if you remember, had quite a different tone than Chapter 9.
- Yes, I sensed that. How do others respond to that?
- Well, not everybody seems to like it. But my position is that as a researcher you can take different perspectives. While in general you should be critical and keep distance from the topic of your research, I think it is not wrong to sometimes also express your enthusiasm and admiration or hope about how things are going. After all, life must remain fun, don't you think?
- Yes, right!
- You know, this uncertainty had some advantages as well. The topic of my research has never become outdated, except of course some of the papers have become outdated because of a new reality, which meant that I could repeatedly postpone the deadline of my research with the advantage that the book now covers a logical period, from the publication of the ESDP in 1999 to the adoption of the Territorial Agenda.
- Haha, so what are your plans now?
- Well, if anything, this research shows how difficult it is to conceive a form of planning that could be made effective in a society like ours. I mean, with the increasing blurring of the governmental centre of control, the ongoing juridification of planning, due to amongst others EU and national sectoral regulations and the shift from restrictive to development planning in which private initiatives become increasingly important, our traditional, so to say, principles of planning need to be reconsidered.
- But your research seems to indicate some directions for this?
- Yes, I found some ways to further institutionalise planning, but frankly I do not really have a firm idea of what this planning in the end will entail. We really need to reflect on this issue from a more theoretical perspective. Also, with the increasing discrepancy between the administrative system and the perceived or socially-constructed space in terms of how citizens experience and conceive of their surroundings, the legitimisation of planning comes under strain.
- Plans don't work anymore in such a context?

- Well, land-use plans will remain accepted simply because of the legal secu-rity they provide, but the role of strategic plans needs to be reconsidered. I think they can still fulfil a role in policy processes, but merely as a tool to reach consensus, rather than as an expression of such consensus. Plan-ning in this sense, whilst retaining a firm eye on the desired organisation and development of space, should find ways through which it can become an intrinsic and, not unimportantly, generally accepted element of secto-ral governance processes. So planning is about governance from a spatial perspective in which it should both indicate spatial limits and constructive solutions to social problems.
- Sounds like there is still some work to do.
- Uhuh, I think so…
- That reminds me, any further mistakes by your government?
- Ha-ha, no. In fact, after the air quality issue, the government and all kinds of governmental organisations and lobbies became really sensitive to new EU policies and tried to influence these processes in any way they could in order to minimise the impact of future regulations and to secure national flexibility as regards the way these policies could be implemented.
- Sounds like they went through a steep learning curve.
- Yes, it was a tough but very effective learning experience.
- Hey, but I forgot to ask, how did the defence of your thesis go?
- Ha-ha, good question, well lets first have a beer, then I'll tell you…

Samenvatting

De institutionalisering van Europese ruimtelijke planning

Bas Waterhout

De centrale vraag in dit onderzoek is of en hoe Europese ruimtelijke planning institutionaliseert. Deze vraag is relevant omdat ongeveer twintig jaar geleden de eerste stappen werden gezet in de richting van het vormgeven van Europese ruimtelijke planning. In 1999 mondde dit uit in de aanvaarding van het Europees Ruimtelijk Ontwikkelingsperspectief door de destijds vijftien EU-ministers verantwoordelijk voor ruimtelijke ordening en de Europees Commissaris voor regionaal beleid. Dit Europees Ruimtelijk Ontwikkelingsperspectief, of EROP, bood voor het eerst een ruimtelijk referentiekader binnen de EU en markeerde daarmee een keerpunt in de geschiedenis van Europese ruimtelijke planning. Inmiddels is een tweede keerpunt bereikt met de aanvaarding van de Territoriale Agenda voor de EU op 25 mei 2007 door de inmiddels 27 EU ministers verantwoordelijk voor ruimtelijke planning. Dit onderzoek heeft betrekking op de tussenliggende periode.

Het simpele feit dat ruimtelijke planners nog steeds samenkomen op Europees niveau duidt erop dat Europese ruimtelijke planning zich inderdaad heeft geïnstitutionaliseerd. Ruimtelijke planning is echter geen formeel EU-beleidsveld en de vraag is dan ook in welke mate het zich heeft verankerd in de formele beleidsprocessen binnen de EU? Dit laatste, het beïnvloeden van bestaand sectoraal EU-beleid, is een expliciet doel van het EROP. Een tweede doel van het EROP is om als referentiekader te dienen voor nationale planningspraktijken. De mate waarin deze twee doelen zijn bereikt vormen centrale vragen in dit onderzoek. Een derde vraag betreft de wijze waarop Europese ruimtelijke planning effectiever zou kunnen worden.

Pijlers van Europese ruimtelijke planning

Naast het EROP en de Territoriale Agenda, dat volgens eigen zeggen het EROP overigens niet vervangt maar complementeert, vormen ook INTERREG en ESPON belangrijke pijlers voor Europese ruimtelijke planning. INTERREG is in 1997 van start gegaan en stimuleert transnationale samenwerking op het gebied van ruimtelijke planning en vormde zodoende een eerste mogelijkheid om ideeën uit het EROP in praktijk te brengen. ESPON staat voor European Spatial Planning Observation Network en is een onderzoeksprogramma dat ten doel heeft ruimtelijke ontwikkelingen op Europees schaalniveau in beeld te brengen en te volgen. ESPON wordt geacht materiaal aan te leveren voor de Territoriale Agenda en het onofficiële achterliggende document Territorial State and Perspectives of the EU.

Al deze pijlers worden bestuurd door comités samengesteld uit vertegenwoordigers van de lidstaten en het Directoraat-Generaal Regio (DG Regio) van de Europese Commissie, waarbij het overigens vaak om dezelfde personen gaat. Zowel INTERREG als ESPON worden bestuurd door dergelijke comités, terwijl de projecten worden uitgevoerd door consortia van respectievelijk regionale en lokale actoren en onderzoeksteams samengesteld uit onderzoeksinstituten verspreid over heel de EU, plus Zwitserland en Noorwegen.

Het EROP werd geschreven door het Comité voor de Ruimtelijke Ontwikkeling (CRO), dat in 2000 werd vervangen door de Spatial and Urban Development Working Group (SUD), dat op zijn beurt in 2007 weer werd vervangen door het comité Territorial Cohesion and Urban Matters (TCUM). Het verschil tussen het CRO en de latere vervangers is dat de lidstaten de voorzittershamer hanteerden, terwijl dat in de SUD en TCUM comités door de Europese Commissie wordt gedaan. Wantrouwen bij de lidstaten was het gevolg en daarom werd de Territoriale Agenda en *Territorial State and Perspectives of the EU* ontwikkeld in de zogenaamde DG-bijeenkomsten die, onafhankelijk van de DG Regio, door de lidstaten zelf werden georganiseerd en bezocht werden door ambtenaren op het niveau van directeur-generaal of iets daaronder.

Dit laatste is niet onbelangrijk en geeft de spanning aan tussen de Europese Commissie enerzijds en de lidstaten anderzijds die wordt veroorzaakt door de wens van de lidstaten om soevereiniteit te behouden op het vlak van ruimtelijke ordening. Ruimtelijke planning is, in tegenstelling tot veel ander beleidsvelden, namelijk geen formele bevoegdheid van de Europese Unie. Dit betekent dat lidstaten volledige zeggenschap behouden over de wijze waarop ze ruimtelijk beleid uitvoeren en dit ook allemaal op verschillende wijze doen, wat (voordat een verkeerde suggestie wordt gewekt) overigens niet het gevolg is van het ontbreken van een Europese bevoegdheid.

Desalniettemin bestaat er onder lidstaten toch een wens om een vorm van ruimtelijke planning te ontwikkelen op Europees niveau. Grofweg zijn hier twee redenen voor aan te geven: (1) dat Europees sectorbeleid impact uitoefent op de ruimtelijke ontwikkeling en ruimtelijke beleidspraktijk van lidstaten en er vanuit ruimtelijk perspectief dus sprake moet zijn van meer beleidscoherentie, en (2) dat bepaalde ruimtelijke structuren een grensoverschrijdend – om niet te zeggen transnationaal of zelfs Europees – karakter hebben en dus ook op een dergelijk schaalniveau gecoördineerd moeten worden.

Bekende voorbeelden van ruimtelijke impact van Europees beleid in Nederland betreffen de Luchtkwaliteit en de Vogel- en Habitatrichtlijn, waarbij opgemerkt dient te worden dat de problemen in beide gevallen grotendeels het gevolg waren van de wijze waarop de Nederlandse regering deze in nationale wetgeving heeft geïmplementeerd. Elke lidstaat is, binnen bepaalde termijnen, namelijk zelf verantwoordelijk voor de wijze waarop ze dit doet. Voorbeelden van transnationale ruimtelijke structuren betreffen de stroomgebieden van bijvoorbeeld de Rijn of Donau, grootschalige ecologische systemen en natuur-

gebieden, maar ook, volgens het EROP, grootschalige verstedelijkte gebieden zoals het zogenaamde Pentagon, bestaande uit het gebied afgebakend door de vijf steden Londen, Parijs, Milaan, München en Hamburg. Dit gebied vormt de kern van Europa en vanwege haar economische dominantie stelt het EROP voor om de ontwikkeling van soortgelijke gebieden te stimuleren (*global economic integration zones*, gekenmerkt door stedelijke netwerken) in meer perifere delen van Europa, teneinde door polycentrische ontwikkeling, een evenwichtiger ontwikkeling van het totale grondgebied van de EU te bewerkstelligen.

Een laatste motivatie van planners om zich op Europees niveau te bewegen betreft de mogelijke toekomstige bevoegdheid van de Europese Unie op het vlak van territoriale cohesie. Zowel de afgewezen Europese Grondwet als het nu te ratificeren Hervormingsverdrag bevatten in artikel 3 een verwijzing naar territoriale cohesie als doelstelling van de EU. Dit is nieuw en grotendeels te danken aan persoonlijke inzet van voormalig Europees Commissaris Michel Barnier (zie hoofdstuk 2). Ratificatie van het Hervormingsverdrag zou betekenen dat de Europese Commissie een leidende rol krijgt in het ontwikkelen van beleid, iets waar de lidstaten zoals gezegd niet op zitten te wachten. Wat de Commissie ondertussen precies onder territoriale cohesie verstaat is onduidelijk. Bij wijze van 'de beste verdediging is de aanval' zijn de lidstaten overgegaan tot het ontwikkelen van de Territoriale Agenda, waarin ze hun visie op onder andere de invulling van territoriaal cohesiebeleid neerleggen.

Institutioneel perspectief
Met bovenstaande gegevens en ideeën als vereenvoudigde weergave van Europese ruimtelijke planning als uitgangspunt, is nagegaan of er sprake is van verdere institutionalisering en indien dat het geval is, hoe dat dan heeft plaatsgevonden. Hiertoe is gebruik gemaakt van verschillende theoretische invalshoeken die binnen één theoretisch raamwerk bijeen gebracht en aan elkaar gerelateerd zijn. De kern van dit raamwerk wordt gevormd door de begrippen instituties en institutionalisering. Instituties worden opgevat als 'stabiele, gewaardeerde en terugkerende gedragspatronen' waarbij institutionalisering dus verwijst naar 'het proces waardoor organisaties en procedures waarde en stabiliteit verkrijgen'. Het begrip institutie betekent daarmee dus meer dan organisatie of procedure en verwijst naar structuren die organisaties en procedures met elkaar verbinden en betekenis geven. In een institutionele setting is gedrag daarom verhoudingsgewijs stabiel en voorspelbaar. Dit maakt dat instituties gewaardeerd worden. Deze stabiliteit heeft echter ook het nadeel dat nieuwe doelen en wensen van bepaalde actoren, of agents, zoals die op het vlak van Europese ruimtelijke planning, niet altijd even snel en vanzelfsprekend geaccepteerd worden.

In dit onderzoek worden instituties voornamelijk vanuit een sociologisch perspectief gezien, waarbij de nadruk wordt gelegd op de wederzijdse relatie tussen *agent* of actor enerzijds en *structure* anderzijds. Meer in het bijzon-

der gaat het erom hen in één model samen te voegen, waardoor processen van institutionele verandering begrijpelijk worden. In het algemeen wordt aangenomen dat zulke verandering plaatsvindt als gevolg van evolutie, 'toeval' of intentie. Alle vormen komen in dit onderzoek aan bod, maar vanwege de actieve rol van planners gaat de meeste aandacht uit naar verandering als gevolg van intentie of institutioneel design. Hierbij dient aangetekend te worden dat instituties zich niet of nauwelijks laten ontwerpen en dat de 'mythe van de intentionele designer' vermeden moet worden in institutionele theorieën. Er is namelijk niet sprake van één institutionele designer, maar van vele: instituties zijn het gevolg van vele tegelijkertijd plaatsvindende en elkaar beïnvloedende pogingen tot verandering.

Volgens het model dat in deze studie wordt gebruikt vindt institutionele verandering plaats wanneer er sprake is van ten eerste een 'kritiek moment', waarin bestaande instituties worden bekritiseerd door interne danwel externe reflecterende actoren (agents), gevolgd door een tweede moment, een 'kritiek kruispunt', waar actoren, gebruikmakend van het eerste moment, zich positioneren en institutionele verandering op gang brengen. Om werkelijk invloed te kunnen uitoefenen, moet een actor beschikken over *transformative capacity*, oftewel de capaciteit om veranderingen te bewerkstelligen. Of een actor hierover beschikt hangt af van zijn vermogen tot (1) institutionele reflectie, hetgeen tot uitdrukking komt in het vinden van sociaal acceptabele oplossing en (2) het verkrijgen van sociale herkenning, vertrouwen en legitimiteit. Dit laatste hangt vooral samen met het zelforganiserend vermogen van een actor en de mate waarin deze in staat is zijn positie te midden van externe actoren te versterken.

Het zelforganiserend vermogen van Europese ruimtelijke planners wordt onderzocht door gebruik te maken van het begrippenkader van de planningdoctrine. Hierin wordt onderscheid gemaakt tussen ruimtelijke concepten, planningprincipes en planninggemeenschap. Ruimtelijke concepten geven in woord of beeld aan hoe wordt aangekeken tegen de huidige en gewenste ruimtelijke structuur. Het pentagon en de gewenste evenwichtige ontwikkeling van het Europees grondgebied door polycentrische ontwikkeling vormen voorbeelden van ruimtelijke concepten. Planningprincipes referen aan normen en regels over de wijze waarop planning moet plaatsvinden. Het EROP spreekt in dat verband van de *spatial approach*, ofwel ruimtelijke aanpak, wat verwijst naar een verzameling van principes zoals horizontale en verticale samenwerking, afstemming en het betrekken van belanghebbenden in planprocessen. Het begrip planninggemeenschap omvat de actoren, zoals beleidsmakers, journalisten, wetenschappers en politici die de overtuiging delen dat ruimtelijke planning als professie en beleidsveld ertoe doet. Deze gemeenschappelijke deler betekent echter niet automatisch dat er binnen de gemeenschap overeenstemming bestaat over de inhoud van planning. In dit geval zijn veel leden van de Europese planninggemeenschap te vinden in de hierboven beschreven comités en projectgroepen, maar ook daarbuiten in, zoals hoofdstuk 2 beschrijft, bij-

voorbeeld het Europees parlement en comité van de regio's.

Externe positieversterking wordt onderzocht door middel van discoursanalyse. Discoursanalyse heeft betrekking op de productie van betekenis (*discours*), bijvoorbeeld in de vorm van nieuwe terminologie en taal, op het niveau tussen dat van actoren en structuren. Wanneer een discours aan kracht en invloed wint en daarmee concurrerende discoursen overvleugelt, wordt wel gesproken van een discursieve hegemonie. Het ontstaan en ontwikkelen van discoursen wordt onderzocht met behulp van (door de onderzoeker zelf te construeren) *storylines* (verhaallijnen), en discourscoalities, die deze verhaallijnen steunen. Wanneer zulke verhaallijnen en de coalities die ze steunen aan invloed winnen en hegemonische status verkrijgen, leidt dit tot institutionele verandering. Planningprincipes en ruimtelijke concepten vallen in dit onderzoek samen met verhaallijnen. De begrippen planninggemeenschap en discourscoalities vallen echter niet altijd samen. Dit gebeurt wel als er sprake is van een zeer sterke consensus onder planners, maar niet als er sprake is, zoals in dit geval, van dieperliggende discoursen over wenselijke Europese maatschappijmodellen, die de consensus over Europese ruimtelijke planning in de weg staan.

Een tweede manier om het extern versterkende vermogen van de Europese planninggemeenschap te onderzoeken is door middel van doorwerkingstheorie gericht op het evalueren van strategische ruimtelijke plannen. In tegenstelling tot discoursanalyse waarbij maatschappelijke ontwikkelingen het uitgangspunt vormen, vormt in deze aanpak het plan het vertrekpunt van analyse. Doorwerkingstheorie spreekt in plaats van implementatie van 'toepassing' van plannen, waarbij het erom gaat dat plannen een rol spelen in latere besluitvormingstrajecten. De nadruk ligt op het vormen en beïnvloeden van de gedachten van de betrokken besluitnemers. Of de beslissingen vervolgens leiden tot conforme uitvoering (*conformance*) is van ondergeschikt belang aan het feit of een plan als strategisch afwegingskader heeft gediend (*performance*) tijdens het besluitvormingsproces. In verschillende omstandigheden, zoals een niet in het plan voorziene situatie of een verouderd plan, is beargumenteerde afwijking van het plan vaak een betere keuze. In alle gevallen kan echter van toepassing worden gesproken en een grote mate van toepassing duidt erop dat een plan als het EROP autoriteit heeft verworven.

Een laatste perspectief op institutionalisering betreft de Europeanisering van planning. Europeanisering verwijst naar processen waarin nationale beleidsvelden zich aanpassen aan en veranderen door de invloed van Europese integratie en Europees beleid. Dit fenomeen doet zich ook voor op het vlak van ruimtelijke planning en vormt relatief kort een object van onderzoek. De Europeanisering van planning uit zich op verschillende wijzen, bijvoorbeeld in de zin dat sinds halverwege de jaren negentig vrijwel elk ruimtelijk plan in Nederland wel een kaartje of hoofdstuk bevat waarin gereflecteerd wordt op de ruimtelijke positie in Europa. Andere voorbeelden betreffen natuurlijk de ruimtelijke impact van EU-beleid, maar ook toenemende samenwerking

op grensoverschrijdend en transnationaal niveau. Ook het EROP, ESPON en INTERREG oefenen invloed uit op nationale praktijken en het is vanuit institutioneel perspectief interessant om te zien hoe de parallelle processen van Europeanisering en Europese ruimtelijke planning elkaar wederzijds beïnvloeden en mogelijk versterken.

De hoofdstukken

De hoofdstukken 2 tot en met 8, die alle hun eigen geschiedenis hebben, vinden een plaats in bovengeschetst kader. Hoofdstuk 2 heeft hierbij een introducerend karakter en bespreekt de formele besluitvormingsprocessen rond EU-beleid. Daarbij passeren alle actoren die daarin een rol spelen de revue en wordt geanalyseerd hoe deze aankijken tegen het idee van Europese ruimtelijke planning of het inpassen van een ruimtelijke dimensie in EU-beleid. Ook wordt er kort gereflecteerd op de planninggemeenschap waarbij geconcludeerd wordt dat de afzonderlijke onderdelen weinig onderlinge relatie vertonen en een gemeenschappelijk gevoel van urgentie lijkt te ontbreken.

Hoofdstuk 3, dat in 2002 gepubliceerd is en daarmee het oudste onderdeel vormt, blikt terug op de totstandkoming van het EROP en de belangrijke discursieve en samenbindende rol daarin voor het concept polycentrische ontwikkeling, waarmee een patstelling kon worden omzeild.

Hoofdstuk 4 tot en met 6 zijn vooral geïnspireerd door het concept territoriale cohesie en de mogelijke invulling ervan. Hoofdstuk 4 laat daarbij zien hoe de planningprincipes van het EROP afwijken van de meer algemene beleidsprincipes van de EU. Om effectief te kunnen worden moeten planners beter aansluiten bij de meer gangbare technische of instrumentele benaderingen van de EU, bijvoorbeeld in de vorm van een *territorial impact assessment* (ruimtelijke-effectbeoordelingsrapportage). Anderzijds moet juist de kracht van planning worden benut en uiteengezet worden hoe ruimtelijke visies een rol kunnen spelen in de noodzakelijke 'verruimtelijking' van beleidsprocessen. Hoofdstuk 5 reflecteert vervolgens op de verschillende ideeën over planning binnen de planninggemeenschap en hoe deze samenhangen met Europese maatschappijmodellen. Hoofdstuk 6 laat zien hoe tegen het eind van 2005 de verschillende actoren met DG Regio aan de ene kant en de lidstaten aan de andere kant ieder hun eigen weg volgen om invulling te geven aan territoriale cohesie. Onder andere geeft dit hoofdstuk een beeld van het zelforganiserend vermogen van de lidstaten, dat redelijk hoog blijkt te zijn. In alle hoofdstukken bestaat aandacht voor de veranderende politieke context, waarbij met name aandacht wordt geschonken aan de invloed op de ontwikkeling van het planningdiscours van de Europese Lissabon- en Gothenburgagenda die zich richt op het creëren van de meest krachtige en duurzame economie van de wereld. Europese ruimtelijke planners proberen aan te haken bij deze EU-doelstelling door onder andere het begrip territoriaal kapitaal een prominente rol te geven in hun activiteiten.

Hoofdstuk 7 analyseert de doorwerking van het EROP in het INTERREG-programma en de INTERREG-prioriteiten en projecten. Het beeld ontstaat dat beleidsideeën uit EROP bij elke stap een geringere rol spelen. Veel uitvoerders van INTERREG-projecten lijken nauwelijks op de hoogte te zijn van het bestaan van het EROP, wat erop duidt dat de institutionele betekenis van Europese ruimtelijke planning voor de regionale beleidspraktijk vooralsnog gering is. Ondanks een gebrek aan *performance* is er niettemin vaak sprake van *conformance* tussen de boodschappen van het EROP en de inhoud en uitvoering van INTERREG-projecten. Dit duidt erop dat het EROP een algemene Europese consensus uitdraagt, maar er tegelijkertijd niet in slaagt om van toegevoegde waarde te zijn bij de uitvoering van concrete projecten en daarmee dus over geringe *transformative capacity* beschikt.

Hoofdstuk 8 onderzoekt processen van Europeanisering van de Nederlandse nationale ruimtelijke ordening. Hoewel de Europese context al decennia lang een rol speelt in ruimtelijke planning in Nederland, blijkt het EROP, waar Nederlandse planners veel in geïnvesteerd hebben, maar weinig applaus te oogsten. Met name sectorale departementen zien er weinig heil in zoals blijkt tijdens de ontwikkeling van de *Vijfde Nota* en daarna de *Nota Ruimte*. Hoewel het merendeel van de boodschappen van het EROP wordt gewaardeerd, wordt het EROP als geheel gerelateerd aan een op cohesie gericht maatschappijmodel, terwijl het Nederlandse model zich juist richt op het versterken van concurrentiekracht; de schoorsteen moet immers blijven roken. Los van het EROP wordt de noodzaak om aan een zekere vorm van ruimtelijke planning op grensoverschrijdend en transnationaal of zelfs Europees niveau te doen wel erkend, maar worden de door Europese ruimtelijke planners aangedragen oplossingen door de sectoren vooralsnog als abstract en weinig nuttig ervaren om concrete problemen mee te lijf te gaan. Waar Europese ruimtelijke planning als *agent* dus over geringe *transformative capacity* beschikt, blijkt de EU-richtlijn inzake luchtkwaliteit de gemoederen wel op scherp te kunnen zetten. Wat planners nooit echt gelukt is gebeurt nu wel, namelijk de aandacht krijgen van politici in de Eerste en Tweede Kamer voor de ruimtelijke gevolgen van EU-beleid. De door de Eerste Kamer aangenomen motie Meindertsma eist systematische monitoring van ruimtelijke impact van EU-beleid, en leidt tot verschuivingen in de agenda en organisatie binnen het ministerie van VROM. Hier is dus sprake van institutionalisering als gevolg van 'toeval' waarbij, geredeneerd vanuit het perspectief van Europese ruimtelijke planning, het kritieke moment door externe factoren is gerealiseerd.

Conclusie

In hoofdstuk 9 worden de voorgaande hoofdstukken bijeen gebracht en aangevuld met recente inzichten die niet als afzonderlijke hoofdstukken in dit boek konden worden opgenomen. Om de vraag te beantwoorden of en in hoeverre Europese ruimtelijke planning is geïnstitutionaliseerd in de periode 1999

tot en met 2007 is eerst gekeken naar de mate van zelforganiserend vermogen en vervolgens naar het externe versterkende vermogen. Daarna wordt de rol van de veranderende context waarin Europese ruimtelijke planning een rol probeert te krijgen nader beschouwd. Afgesloten wordt met een vooruitblik en een *roadmap* waarmee ruimtelijke planning effectiever zou kunnen worden.

Aan de hand van de begrippen planninggemeenschap, ruimtelijke concepten en planningprincipes is nagegaan hoe de Europese ruimtelijke planning zich heeft ontwikkeld. Het blijkt dat de interne samenhang tussen de onderdelen van de planninggemeenschap ondanks een steviger verandering door middel van het opzetten van het ESPON-programma, in zowel organisatorisch als inhoudelijk opzicht te wensen overlaat. Dat uit zich organisatorisch in gebrekkige feedback, consultatie en communicatie systemen, en inhoudelijk in het onvermogen om de cohesie en concurrentie discoursen te doen versmelten in één hegemonisch discours. Polycentrische ontwikkeling weet de discoursen wel aan elkaar te relateren, maar niet te doen vergeten. Dat wil overigens niet zeggen dat er geen discursieve ontwikkeling heeft plaatsgevonden.

Het pentagon figureert ook nog in teksten uit 2007, zoals die van de *Territorial State and Perspectives of the EU*. Hierin wordt het echter als *the core*, oftewel kern, van Europa aangeduid, dat nu in plaats van 15 uit 27 lidstaten bestaat. De economische dominantie van dit kerngebied heeft in deze nieuwe situatie nauwelijks aan kracht ingeboet, maar wordt genuanceerd door te wijzen op het feit dat de Noordelijke landen minstens even goed scoren als het gaat om het beantwoorden aan Lissabondoelstellingen. Bovendien blijken veel steden buiten het kerngebied, zoals Madrid, Rome, Athene, maar ook Budapest, Praag en Bratislava, zich goed te ontwikkelen en wordt vooral ook nadruk gelegd op het belang van middelgrote steden zoals Valencia en Gothenburg, maar ook Vilnius, Riga en Cork. Het kerngebied lijkt zich dus uit te breiden naar andere delen van Europa. Het *Vierde Cohesierapport* van de Europese Commissie wijst erop dat op het niveau van lidstaten vrijwel alle hoofdstedelijke regio's enorm aan kracht hebben gewonnen, wat zou duiden op het ontstaan van een Europa van hoofdstedelijke sociaal-economische 'eilanden'.

Op het vlak van gewenste ruimtelijke ontwikkeling heeft het concept polycentrische ontwikkeling aan kracht ingeboet. Korte tijd was het zelfs geheel uit de discussie verdwenen, maar op instigatie van vooral de centraal- en oost-Europese lidstaten is het toch weer teruggekeerd in de Territoriale Agenda. Het expliciete idee om de ontwikkeling te stimuleren van zogenaamde *global economic integration zones* is verlaten en vervangen door een meer realistischer aanpak gericht op het uitbuiten en gebruikmaken van aanwezig regionaal potentieel, een afgeleide van het territoriaal kapitaal. Hoewel niet uitgewerkt, wordt in zowel de Territoriale Agenda als ESPON aandacht geschonken aan nieuwe thema's die in het EU-debat zijn opgekomen, zoals klimaatverandering, energievoorziening, demografische verandering en het voorkomen van natuurrampen. Hiermee geven Europese ruimtelijke planners nadrukkelijk

uiting aan de institutionele strategie aansluiting te zoeken bij het dominerende debat en daar vanuit ruimtelijk perspectief aan bij te dragen.

Op het vlak van planningprincipes staat de inhoudelijke betekenis van de *spatial approach* nog overeind, maar wordt dit nu gebracht in termen van *territorial governance*, hetgeen als een uitdaging wordt gezien in plaats van een aanpak. Voor wat betreft toepassing kan een verschuiving worden vastgesteld binnen het Europese planningdiscours van hogere schaalniveaus richting regio. Regio's worden gezien als de belangrijkste variabele in het bereiken van Europese ruimtelijke doelstellingen.

In termen van externe versterking wordt geconstateerd dat de *storylines* van de planninggemeenschap verschillend resoneren in de buitenwereld. Met name op EU-niveau, de belangrijkste adressant waar de planninggemeenschap zich tot richt, blijkt, met uitzondering van DG Regio, weinig belangstelling te bestaan voor de *storylines*, die over het algemeen te abstract worden gevonden. DG Regio op haar beurt slaagt er ook maar nauwelijks in de ideeën verder te verspreiden binnen de gefragmenteerde Europese Commissie. Hier tegenover staat de relatief grote invloed van het EROP op nationale en regionale planningpraktijken binnen de lidstaten, in het bijzonder daar waar geen sprake was van een goed ontwikkeld ruimtelijk beleid. Niettemin blijft ook hier de invloed beperkt tot het domein van ruimtelijke planning, dat zich over het algemeen genomen in een zwakke positie bevindt ten opzichte van sectorale beleidsvelden. Dit is nadelig voor Europese ruimtelijke planning omdat Europese beleidsontwikkeling via de nationale sectoren loopt.

Hoewel Europese ruimtelijke planning de wereld om haar heen vooralsnog maar mondjesmaat weet te beïnvloeden, kunnen verschillende processen worden geïdentificeerd die erop duiden dat deze wereld op haar beurt zelf aan het veranderen is en mogelijk ten gunste van ruimtelijke planning. Gewezen wordt op de toegenomen Europeanisering van nationale en regionale planning door heel Europa als gevolg van onder andere het EROP, ESPON, INTERREG, maar ook als gevolg van Europese integratie in het algemeen waardoor nationale en regionale actoren zich in toenemende mate ruimtelijk positioneren, alsmede als gevolg van *top-down* invloed van Europese regelgeving. Een andere trend die wordt waargenomen is een intrinsieke verruimtelijking van een aantal Europese beleidsvelden. Dit geldt voor het Europese regionale beleid en werkgelegenheidsbeleid, voor de structuurfondsen die geëvalueerd zullen worden in 2008 op hun bijdrage aan de Lissabondoelstellingen (wat tot een nieuw kritiek moment kan leiden), maar ook voor bijvoorbeeld de Kaderrichtlijn Water, het integrale maritieme beleid en het plattelandsontwikkelingsbeleid. Daarnaast wordt er ook door invloedrijke instanties buiten de Europese Commissie, zoals het Europese milieuagentschap, of zelfs buiten de EU, zoals de World Health Organisation, gewezen op het belang van goede ruimtelijke planning voor de volksgezondheid. Uitspraken van dergelijke externe institutioneel reflecterende actoren kunnen bijdragen aan het ont-

staan van nieuwe kritieke momenten.

Vervolgens wordt een strategie gepresenteerd, gericht op het effectiever laten opereren van de planninggemeenschap in deze veranderende wereld. Drie wegen worden onderscheiden: (1) het volgen van de huidige weg met de Territoriale Agenda en ESPON, (2) het opstarten van een vanuit de beleidspraktijk groeiend discours gericht op concrete toepassingen van Europese ruimtelijke planning, en (3) het veroorzaken van een 'schok' gericht op institutionele verandering als gevolg van 'toeval'. Het volgen van de eerste weg ligt voor de hand waarbij vooral de rol van ESPON grote waarde wordt toegedicht als verbindend element binnen de planninggemeenschap en vanwege potentieel extern versterkend vermogen. De Territoriale Agenda heeft vooral een functie binnen de gemeenschap. De tweede weg is nieuw en roept planners op zich een rol te verschaffen in complexe *multi-level* beleidsprocessen (buiten INTERREG) die al veel plaatsvinden op grensoverschrijdend en transnationaal niveau en daar vanuit een ruimtelijk perspectief proberen bij te dragen aan het vinden van beleidsoplossingen. De derde weg is ingegeven door de luchtkwaliteitzaak in Nederland en moet meer worden opgevat als een overweging dan als een realistische strategie. Algemeen zou de planninggemeenschap minder gericht moeten zijn op het bereiken van interne consensus om deze vervolgens aan de man proberen te krijgen. Niet alleen is, gezien de verschillende problematieken waarmee de 27 lidstaten te maken hebben, het bereiken van een dergelijke consensus buitengewoon complex, ook mag niet teveel worden verwacht van de mate waarin deze consensus invloed uit zal oefenen op andere beleidsvelden. De beperkte middelen en energie kunnen daarom beter worden aangewend voor het identificeren van maatschappelijke thema's waaraan Europese ruimtelijke planning een mogelijke bijdrage kan leveren in het zoeken naar oplossingen.

Geconcludeerd kan worden dat ondanks alle kanttekeningen, en wellicht teleurstellende resultaten, zeker in de ogen van Europese planners zelf, Europese ruimtelijke planning in de twintig jaar vanaf de eerste stappen, en zeker ook in de laatste acht jaar, sterker geïnstitutionaliseerd is geraakt. Gezien de beperkte mogelijkheden van de planninggemeenschap in termen van budgetten en personeel, kan niet verwacht worden dat op alle fronten tegelijk geschaakt kan worden. Er zal selectief omgegaan moeten worden met kansen die zich aandienen, waarbij de drie onderscheiden wegen elkaar kunnen versterken. Gezien de grote institutionele verschillen tussen de werking van de EU en de planningprincipes van de Europese planninggemeenschap, is het bewonderenswaardig wat bereikt is. Met de Territoriale Agenda en de continuering van het ESPON-programma heeft de toekomst er nog nooit zo zonnig uitgezien. Misschien wordt dit niet altijd en door iedereen zo ervaren, maar het geeft aan dat het doorzettingsvermogen van de Europese planninggemeenschap uiteindelijk wordt beloond. Er is geen indicatie dat dit in de toekomst zal veranderen.

Curriculum Vitea

Bas Waterhout was born on 3 March 1974 in Eethen. He received his VWO diploma in 1991 from the Scholengemeenschap Lelystad. Between 1992 and 1998 he studied spatial planning, or *planologie*, at the University of Amsterdam where he specialised in strategic decision-making and regional planning. This culminated in a Master's Thesis on the making of the European Spatial Development Perspective. This thesis formed the basis of the book *The Making of the ESDP*, which he co-authored with Andreas Faludi. After having obtained his masters degree (with honour) he worked for a short period as a project assistant at the Netherlands Institute for Spatial Planning and Housing (the NIROV). From 1999 to 2003 he worked as a junior researcher at Nijmegen University. Since 2003 he has worked as a researcher at OTB Research Institute for Housing, Urban and Mobility Studies at Delft University of Technology.

   Bas Waterhout was involved in several commissioned projects for the National Spatial Planning Agency and took part in various international research teams in the context of the INTERREG IIC EURBANET project and several ESPON projects (European Spatial Planning Observation Network). He is author and editor of several articles, books, book chapters, special issues, conference papers and reports concerning European spatial planning and has organised a number of international and national workshops on this issue. For a period of more than six years he was an editor of the Dutch professional journal *Rooilijn*. Currently he is an active member of the Dutch Professional Organisation of Urban Designers and Planners and a board member of the Planologische Diskussiedagen foundation.

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This book questions whether and how European spatial planning is becoming institutionalised. Since the first steps towards creating spatial planning at the European level were taken some twenty years ago, it seems appropriate to look back at what has been achieved over this period. Notable achievements have been the adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) in 1999 and the Territorial Agenda of the European Union in 2007. The main analysis covers the period between these two key achievements. The book examines the extent to which the European spatial planning agenda has become embedded in policy-making, in particular in ongoing discussions about the future of EU territorial cohesion policy. In so doing, it gives a roadmap for European spatial planning.