

STUDY PROGRAMME ON EUROPEAN SPATIAL PLANNING

Possible fields of policy implications and rural urban partnerships

FINAL DRAFT VERSION

SUMMARY REPORT

Working Group 2.4

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INTRODUCTION

This is the summary report of the theme 2.4 working group. The structure of this report is as follows: the introductory section outlines how the group approached its task, and the first part discusses some of the conceptual issues raised by the focus on urban-rural partnership. The second part summarises some of the main concluding points from other theme 2 working groups.

The third part consists of the policy and governance conclusions, suggested policy messages and proposals for further research. This is based upon a synthesis drawn from the reports from the 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 working groups, and upon the seven subtheme studies prepared for Study Strand 1. The concluding section of the report is divided into two: 3.1 Policy and governance messages, directed at the different audiences; and 3.2 Proposals for further research.

No working group was formed at the beginning of the SPESP work (Dec 1998) for this section of Strategic Study 2. Its origins lay in the Task Force set up in March 1999 to propose a framework for coordinating and integrating the whole of Strategic Study 2, and ensuring that the different study strands adopt a common focus on urban-rural relationships within the different types of territory that can be identified. The Task Force reported to the Nijmegen plenary (June 1999), and the proposal that a working group be formed from it was agreed then. The Task Force proposal that this group should include within its brief governance and policy-delivery issues, as part of its consideration of policy implications, was also agreed. The potential role for this section in framing conclusions, drawing whole report together and balancing the role proposed for the 2.1 paper in the final report, was recognised.

The range of different audiences for the SPESP report, used for the analysis below, was also agreed at Nijmegen. It has the following components:

(a) Community level, EU institutions:

DG16
the whole Commission
Committee of the Regions, European Parliament

(b) Intergovernmental, EU governments collectively:

Committee of Spatial Development
Informal Council of Spatial Planning Ministers

(c) National, regional and local authorities:

National governments
Regional authorities and regional actors in the spatial planning process
Local authorities and local actors in the spatial planning process

(d) Research Community:

universities, research institutes, funding bodies.

In total, it should be possible to argue that 'the whole ESDP audience' has been covered. I am using this phrase to include all those professionals and policy-makers from all levels of government and spatial scales who have shown an interest (eg by attending the 1998-9 series of transnational seminars) plus those who ought to be interested.

In the period following Nijmegen, the group considered its scope and mode of operation. It was agreed that the group was dependent upon output from the other working groups, and that the key phase in its work would follow the Rome plenary in October 1999.

1. Discussion of Issues

Elaboration of the issues and of knowledge so far of the rural-urban dimension of spatial policy.

The term urban-rural relationship was adopted as a neutral starting point, with the proposition that rural-urban partnerships were not necessarily in place, and that there was a need to examine the circumstances in which they are to be found, or are absent, the role they perform and how they can be promoted. Therefore, in order to develop a satisfactory basis for the identification of public policies aimed at promoting urban-rural partnerships, the definition of urban-rural partnership must be examined.

It is necessary to break away from the traditional conceptions of the 'urban' and the 'rural' as different categories of territory, in a sense 'in opposition' to each other. Modern mobility has rendered the old formal urban-rural administrative divisions obsolete since urban and rural areas complement each other in an increasingly integrated manner.

Perceptions play a key role. Concepts of urbanity may encompass a spatial vision of development axes, or of rural areas as a source of recreation. Concepts of rurality may include greening the urban spaces, preventing urban sprawl and protecting food production, or in peripheral areas the survival of the rural economy and of the service functions of small market towns.

1.1 Differentiation of territory

There is an enormously wide range of possible relationships. The adoption by the Theme 2 Task Force of a so-called 'common sense' typology of 5 categories of territory was devised as a way into the analysis so that work could proceed concurrently with the development of more elaborate and scientifically-robust typologies of territory by the 2.2 working group.

These 5 categories are:

- (1) metropolitan*
- (2) polycentric urban, mixture of high and low density*
- (3) urbanised rural areas (accessible rural)*
- (4) deep rural (non-accessible rural)*
- (5) peripheral.*

Within the metropolitan category, the spatial scale of urban-rural relationships is greater than for the other. Within the second and third categories, relatively strongly developed relationships are

expected, although it is by no means necessarily the case that there are close links between cities and adjacent areas. For the fourth and fifth, the traditional characteristics of the rural economy and society may remain visible, certainly they benefit from much lower levels of accessibility, and, possibly as a consequence, they are more likely to be lagging behind in their development. The difference between them is that the deep rural is a category not necessarily present in all member-states, while peripheral is here taken as a more relative concept, in the sense of territories considered peripheral in their national rather than EU context. The spectrum does not take the same form in all EU countries, and wide variations exist in gradients and in urban texture of change between categories. So, policy must recognise the lack of homogeneity in EU territory.

The key question is how to ensure that this heterogeneity is not divisive, and can be turned into a basis on which to build territorial cohesion. Pursuit of the concept of polycentricity is the political answer, as expressed in the ESDP following the Leipzig principles, while research into elements of territorial differentiation offers a scientific and methodological response. To act on the EU territory with the logic of cohesion, it is necessary to break out from the orthodox logic of responding to regional disadvantage and/or disparities by means of compensation payments, and develop policy based upon a response to regional disadvantage and/or disparities with a logic derived from complementarity of differences. To do this, we need to understand the principle dynamics (the Main Trends analysis in 2.1) influencing EU space in order to account for its differentiation, adopting a dynamic concept in order to make morphological and socio-economic distinctions of its underlying structure.

The principle of differentiation raises the question of scales of implementation and the forms of intervention of public policy at different spatial scales:

- at the EU scale, to respond to territorial differentiation and the variety of different kinds of regions and territories by identifying interregional or transnational groups and spaces offering, in terms of urban-rural complementarity, economic, social and geographical coherence, and developing public policies specific to these different types of territory.
- the treatment of mobility within periurban space and between urbanised spaces does not imply the same considerations and is not drawn from the same analysis in the case of territories with very low density, compared with major regions where the urban structure is dense and relatively polycentric.
- this differentiation of macro-territories at the EU level implies the production of specific tools for the internal analysis of these territories, for example to determine at which spatial scale is their internal coherence established, what are their specific considerations in terms of cohesion. The factors of centrality on which to sustain or develop a perspective of urban-rural solidarity will not be the same in Extremadura and Lombardy, for example.

It is necessary to take into account territorial differences drawn from criteria based on activities, exchanges and flows, which very often do not correspond to the institutional dimension superimposed upon it. At all scales, including the EU scale, the lines dividing the territorial identity (economic/ social/ cultural) as perceived by residents should not be expected to correspond to the lines defined for purposes of institutional and political management. So, the first public policy question to be addressed is that of devising a method of allowing the expression of these two realities. Up to now, this type of question has been mainly raised at the local level where the

compétence of national states remains dominant, but it would certainly be interesting if ESPON could start to construct an answer at the EU scale. The opportunity may come with the final evaluation of the conception and implementation of the Interreg IIC programme. In deciding how we could observe convergence within and between territories where IIC has been implemented and coherence of macro-territories built up from urban-rural relationship criteria at the EU level, we could analyse how far cohesion and urban-rural partnerships are captured in the contents of these programmes, and how far these are articulated through the ways in which national procedures apply and implement these EU programmes. For example, what is the impact of boundaries in limiting the application of public policies, relative to these macro-territories and the policies which apply to them?

1.2 Conclusions

These three issues lead us to consider the nature and activities of this type of observatory (ORATE/ESPON), in the context of making public policy proposals.

The first conclusion concerns the role ESPON should play in realising the objective of cohesion. It must give scientific content to objectives that remain essentially political by production of definitions, researchable questions, advice on territorial applications and construction of indicators for evaluation. In this context, it must also provide for measurement of the real impact of public policy measures (especially those of the EU) while at the same time identifying policy levers which would guarantee greater efficiency.

The second concerns the role it could play in support of social innovation linked to urban-rural partnership. Faced with the standard and repetitive character of policies that have been pursued up to now to combat regional disparities, is it not appropriate to look for the required 'punchy policy messages' in the application of methods of transfer and exchange of experiences applicable to the different micro-territories? Social innovation will only appear in response to the specific needs of specific territories. Consequently, the evidence from the case-studies (theme 2.3) must be the object of detailed analysis of their relationship with their context and the specific features of their territory in order progressively to develop a methodology for analysing innovation and its potential application to the different categories of territory. Continued use of case-study methodology, with the adoption of a more focussed and controlled structure, is therefore proposed for the next study programmes.

2. Argument

2.1 Main Trends

This report clearly establishes the need to associate issues of government with the discussion of policy implications, and the need to concentrate attention on the issue of the governance capacity of territories which comprise elements that are both 'urban' and 'rural' in character, and which bridge the divide discussed above. This report also discusses different conceptions of polycentricity which must be recognised if the vision or doctrine of polycentric development is to be converted into a meaningful paradigm for spatial policy.

The report concludes with proposals and suggested priorities for the further research agenda, which should be read in conjunction with part 3.2 of this report.

2.2 Typologies of territories

The general conclusion from the work of this group concerns the role that a typology and classification, either of cities or territories, may play as the basis for policy-making and for area-based policy initiatives. From the point of view of policy implications and urban-rural relationships, it is clear that the development of typologies of territories, rather than cities, is more appropriate. The analysis has led to a proposal to refine the five categories of territory originally adopted (1.1 above), based on the identification from the data available of the following five categories:

1. Regions dominated by a large metropolis
2. Polycentric regions with high urban and rural densities
3. Polycentric regions with high urban densities
4. Networks of medium and small towns
5. Remote rural areas.

Much depends on the quality of data, and the underlying theories and conceptions of territories for which data is assembled. The experience of this group has generated specific and detailed conclusions concerning further work, and the data requirements for this (3.2, below). The emphasis is more on this than on offering policy messages at this stage of the work. The underlying question that remains, however, is that of how valuable a typology-based approach to policy-making and the development of policy instruments really can be.

2.3 Summary of conclusions for the different types of territory

- Metropolitan areas

Measures have been identified which encourage the decentralisation of employment and a tendency to functional specialisation through the creation of centres of economic activity around the periphery of the metropolitan area (edge city effect). This represents a move towards one of the models of a polycentric structure identified in the 2.1 work. It is suggested that agriculture and forestry can play a role within a strategy for ecological and tourism infrastructure within the urbanised area.

- Polycentric areas

It is necessary to develop regional spatial plans which offer an integrated response to the critical dimensions of polycentric areas: economy, environment, settlement and mobility. Measures aimed at creating a common identity and positive image for the polycentric area as a whole (including those interstitial areas between the main centres) are seen to be valuable. The case of Stuttgart is a good example.

- Urbanised rural

A major asset of these areas is their environmental quality. In order to preserve this, it is necessary to create and implement norms concerning the balance between industrial, urban and agricultural uses. In some cases, old industrial areas offer good opportunities for conversion into facilities for tourism, leisure and culture (green spaces, museums, exhibition halls, etc). This policy, along with investment in the development of environmentally-friendly products and activities based on the natural heritage and rural culture, may offer the potential to diversify the economic base and increase employment. Strengthening the urban character of the main centres may help to attract population and functions to them and counteract the tendency towards population dispersal.

- Deep rural and peripheral areas

It is essential to create mechanisms and incentives at the European level to underline the value and importance of these areas, and to maintain them as a legacy for future generations. In the case of more remote regions, the use of new information and communication technologies may contribute to the reduction in the perception of peripherality and help to draw people together. Diffusion of new technologies is important not only to stimulate the economic base but also to provide for social support, improving the range of specialised services available, in order to maintain the quality of life for isolated populations. A fundamental point is the improvement of accessibility so that small communities may form functioning networks, benefiting from complementary service provision. Such networking should also facilitate the sharing of infrastructure and participation in projects requiring economic, social and cultural cooperation.

3. Findings and Conclusions

This section will contain the main substantive conclusions in the form of policy messages, policy and governance implications (part 3.1) and suggestions of where further research is needed which could form the basis for proposals for future ESPON study programmes (part 3.2). The material in 3.1 is grouped into three broad categories: 3.1.1 The nature of EU spatial development policy, 3.1.2 Regional institution building, 3.1.3 Messages specific to other spatial scales. The discussion of further research is likewise set in three broad categories: 3.2.1 Data issues, availability and quality, 3.2.2 Substantive research themes, 3.2.3 Reviews of existing research and evaluation studies.

This section is based upon a review of all the theme 1 reports, as well as the other elements of theme 2. A detailed matrix of all the policy messages contained in these reports, classified according to the audience(s) to which the message applies, is contained in ANNEX I of this summary. The specific points made are not necessarily repeated in the main text.

(NB the matrix was prepared by Churie and Mueller, and sent separately, not attached to this document)

At an earlier stage in the work, the meeting of the Task Force for Strategic Study 2 and the working parties for Study Strands 2.2 and 2.3 in Paris, 22-23 April 1999 held a short

brainstorming session to identify issues which could form part of the agenda for this report. These are listed in ANNEX II.

3.1 Findings - Policy and governance implications.

3.1.1 The nature of EU spatial development policy

(NB: the symbol # identifies ESDP Policy Options)

It is clear from the studies that policies need to vary if they are to be adapted successfully to different regions of EU (ESDP #13). The general problem of a lack of integrated thinking in spatial planning is noted, along with the dominance of sector and compartmentalised policy and practice. As a consequence, the principle of sustainable development cannot be achieved in practice, for example in regional development programmes (structural funds), plans and projects. Spatial development policy should consider all factors, and avoid placing reliance just on one weapon such as technology or hard infrastructure.

Pilot projects which aim at a higher degree of integration and sustainable development should be promoted. The work of the network 'Promotion of sustainable development under structural funds policies', initiated by DG XVI, should be taken into account and could be continued under the ESPON programme suggested in the ESDP Action Programme.

Experience suggests that economic and social cohesion between the periphery and the ESDP pentagon is possible, and sometimes rapid, but this does not occur as a result of any single process. Essential factors include transition from government to governance, ability to maintain competitiveness based on comparative advantages, infrastructure, repositioning, long-term investment in human resources and social capital.

A consistent finding has been that regional policy effects and outcomes are always overshadowed by national trends. However, there must be some doubt about whether this will remain true with EMU. This issue, and the wider spatial policy implications of EMU, could be added to the research agenda, with the expectation that the spatial pattern of regional disparities will change, and possibly be more susceptible to regional and transnational rather than national policy instruments

Polycentric case-study areas analysed show the importance of good road and rail networks, telecommunication infrastructure, and flight connections for attracting new activities. (ESDP #24, 26). If the trans-European networks increase the difference in accessibility between the central and peripheral regions, then they will contribute to spatial polarisation. Therefore, there is a need to ensure secondary network provision keeps pace with TENs (ESDP #24). As the relative position of peripheral regions varies according to the mode of transport used, it is important to pay special attention to solutions which improve intermodal accessibility. A European Transport Policy truly committed to

cohesion would have to shift significantly its focus to transport links within and between the peripheral regions, not in addition to but at the expense of transport investments in the European core. (ESDP #26)

Patterns of long-term unemployment differ across the EU. In the north and central parts, it is worst in urbanised areas with weak industrial structures, whereas in the south it is worst in agricultural areas where alternative employment is lacking.

Greater homogeneity in the spacing of urban centres is often the case with CEECs and must be taken into account in spatial strategies under pre-accession arrangements under PHARE, the Pre-Accession Structural Instrument and Community Instruments such as INTERREG when accession countries are included (ESDP #5). Also, it should be considered in negotiations over future application of structural funds, development of policy instruments, operational programmes.

3.1.2 Regional Institution Building

One of the most striking observations from the evaluation of all the case studies is the impression that there is considerable capacity for problem solving at the regional level. A wide definition of regional is adopted in this context, to refer to levels of government above that of single communities or municipalities, and below that of national authorities. The regional level is also taken to include the interregional and transnational dimensions, and is assumed to be vertically integrated other levels from local to national and EU.

Case-studies of good practice provided evidence for this, as did discussion of proposals (for example: Thessaly, Greece, Milan, Italy). This issue relates to the subsidiarity debate and may suggest the further devolution of competences to the regional level.

Nonetheless, limits of the problem solving capacity at the regional level are clearly indicated, often associated with a weak institutional base. Those limits are rooted in the existing political and administrative structures and competences which leave only moderate influence for regional planning. Regional spatial planning seems, from cases all over Europe, to be limited or squeezed by strong municipalities on the one hand and by strong federal or national legislative and executive institutions on the other hand. As a regional legislative basis for planning is lacking in most member-states, regional spatial planning is then dependent on voluntary cooperation and the consent of municipal and supra-regional stakeholders and institutions. This kind of structural embeddedness only allows win-win policy options to be adopted. Co-operation will not lead to success in situations where political conflicts within the region need to be resolved or in cases where costs and benefits are likely to be shared in a very unequal way.

Variations in institutional structures are seen to hamper some regions, and benefit others, when the performance of EU regions is compared. Nevertheless, the value of intermunicipal cooperation in all types of region is shown as an instrument for infrastructure provision, regional economic development activities, the development of the natural and cultural heritage, and seems a promising strategy to achieve higher degree of coordination for regional development. (ESDP #20, 21, 22)

A region's ability to attract and retain educated people is as important as its ability to attract firms. There is an increased emphasis on the need to ensure that they have an abundance of technically skilled workers in order to increase the attractiveness of a region to FDI. Thus, regional institution-building should be taken to include measures to ensure that the educational infrastructure is in place. Rural and non-metropolitan regions can compete provided that they can offer the right skills, specialisation and availability of finance and labour. (ESDP #7, 8, 13). In general, there is scope for greater linkage than has existed so far between EU educational programmes and spatial development objectives.

3.1.3 Messages for other spatial scales and specific sectors

In order to build links with the social and urban agendas, there is a need to develop policy in respect of immigration and concentrations of ethnic minority population in conjunction with policy for urban areas and social exclusion, linking to the URBAN Community Initiative. To a very large, and increasing, extent people facing social exclusion or being in processes that might end up in exclusion, are spatially concentrated in areas with poor reputation and relatively poor standards. Thus social diversification has a discernible spatial dimension (ESDP #9). From an intra-regional perspective it is obvious that the inequality problem has been exacerbated by a spatial concentration on a local level.

Areas in the periphery and the semi-periphery will be more susceptible to economic uncertainties, particularly if they base most of their economic development on the tourist trade, much of which is dependent on the larger global economy (ESDP #18).

The development of tourism which is both „soft“ and environmentally compatible is a good option. However, the growing expansion of this sector carries the risk that the capacity of the environment to absorb this could be overstretched, making it necessary to establish measures that would adequately guarantee meeting conservation objectives. Those areas that are capable of maintaining intense and prolonged development must be clearly differentiated from those that are sensitive, fragile, or endangered. The importance of water must be emphasised in this context, not only as a resource for the development of human activities, but as a key element in the environment, essential for numerous natural processes (ESDP #45, 47). As noted below, this theme did not receive much attention in the case studies.

The pressure put on the environment must be taken into consideration when evaluating the territorial impact that large infrastructure will have on the territory, not only from the developments themselves but from exploitation of the improved accessibility that may follow (ESDP #40). Nevertheless, efforts must be made to promote activities related to environmental conservation, improvement, and management that will open new economic opportunities for territories otherwise lacking in development and employment (ESDP #18).

The role that forests play in the European environment is undeniable; not only as 'green lungs' that help to reduce the greenhouse effect, but also as natural ecosystems. However, and despite their transcendence in European environmental policy, little is known about

the characteristics of the European wooded masses at a continental level. It therefore becomes imperative that an inventory of European forests be undertaken, in which, among other considerations, their degree of naturalness, age, state, etc. This information is essential when it comes to evaluating the environmental characteristics of the European territory. (ESDP #41)

One of the themes that should be included in the preparation of spatial development strategies for areas with specific environmental characteristics (protected areas, environmentally sensitive areas, and areas of high biodiversity, such as coastal areas, mountain areas, and wetlands) is the creation of co-operation and experience exchange networks between areas of similar characteristics, but which experience varied spatial development pressures due to their different geographic locations (ESDP #42).

The tendency, when considering the concept of cultural landscapes, is towards a sustainable use of the landscape and not towards museumification. For example, green and cultural tourism and regional marketing initiatives contribute to this development. Participatory approaches start playing a major role in regional planning and should be applied on the landscape concept as well (ESDP #54). In the rural landscapes, agricultural and forestry policies play a major role as a steering instrument. (ESDP #55, 56). But the most important message seems to be, that there is no ready-made solution for the management of cultural landscapes (ESDP #57,60).

Protection of quality and diversity of the rural environment, the potential of small and medium towns, care of urban landscapes and heritage may be one of Europe's most valuable comparative advantages for future global competitiveness (ESDP #40, 42). A tourism strategy can promote local cultural identity and offer economic alternative to agriculture in rural areas, in partnership with urban tourism, although there is a danger of encouraging traffic generation.

Problems with agriculture can add to the sense of crisis in deep rural areas by increasing depopulation. In accessible rural areas, uncontrolled urbanisation may disrupt the rural/agricultural elements of regional economy, and a clear policy relating to the extent to which agriculture is maintained is needed. But, several case-studies refer to the CAP as potential threat to agriculture in the regions studied. Therefore, spatial strategies need to answer the question of where large-scale farming, intensification or diversification are the appropriate policies. Also, it is noted that the influence of the CAP often promotes development in conflict with sustainable development objectives (ESDP #15). The industrialisation of agricultural production should be considered as a form of urbanisation, recognised by spatial planning for urban regions and polycentric structures (ESDP #21). Nevertheless, agriculture and forestry are shown to be capable of playing a positive role if embedded in a strategy for urbanisation and/or ecological and tourist infrastructure. (ESDP #13). However, private investment is often lacking in rural areas, limiting the scope for economic diversification and for sustaining projects after EU funding ends. (ESDP #14, 15, 16, 17).

3.2 Further research

This section is developed from issues identified in the Theme 1 and 2 studies, and related to the proposals for a medium-term ESPON programme agreed at the Tampere ministers meeting,

October 1999. The audience is primarily the first and second of the categories identified in the introduction, plus the research community (universities, research funding bodies, spatial research institutes) in member-states.

Proposals for further research are discussed under the following headings:

- (a) Data issues
- (b) Substantive research themes
- (c) Reviews of existing research and evaluation.

In relation to the SPESP programme, there is another dimension which cuts across this. Some 'Further Research' proposals are studies that might have been undertaken as part of SPESP, but were not either because of problems of data availability or because the value of adopting a particular approach was not recognised and agreed within a working party until a late stage of the SPESP programme. Other proposals are wider or deeper than SPESP was able to undertake, or are new approaches.

Note also that the summary reports of other theme 2 working groups have included sections on further research which are not reproduced in full here. They should, however, fall broadly within the framework set out below.

(a) Data quality and availability

One area of research should be to examine possible refinements of the accessibility indicators, for example by taking account of time table information in rail and air networks, of multi- and intermodality in passenger and freight networks, of political, economic and cultural barriers and of different types of actors and users.

A second area of research should explore new concepts of accessibility indicators that have not yet been made operational, such as indicators taking account of telecommunication (as a substitute or complement to physical travel) or indicators that are not scalar values but multi-valued distributions.

Basic tasks include the maintenance of an integrated database provided and updated in the REGIO and GISCO databases of Eurostat, and the development of a manual of indicators to enable researchers to calculate the standard indicators in a comparable way. In order to fill gaps in environmental data, there is a need for DG16 / EEA/ Eurostat to work closely together with a wider circle of experts to integrate natural assets into the ESDP analysis and select pilot areas of EU for further study. An important issue is that of spatial scale, since environmental data differs from other indicators due to natural factors. Pilot studies could help devise a basis for integration with ESDP. The complexity and subtlety of urban-rural spatial relationships means analysis with NUTS 5 data (SIRE) and equivalent scale from EEA (Corine) is needed.

A period of validation of the results of the indicators must be undertaken. From the medium- and long-term point of view, it is essential that the data situation is improved. For short-term-solutions, case studies with qualitative data as a starting point seem to be more favourable,

especially since landscapes do not necessarily end where administrative or political frontiers occur, as one is made believe through the utilization of the nomenclature of statistical territorial units (NUTS) used by EUROSTAT.

There is a need for a more detailed database than NUTS 3 if typology analysis is to be sufficiently sensitive to real differences due, for example, to very low population densities of Nordic region. To be relevant to rural areas, data on settlements under 10000 population needed, and for those under 1000 in Arctic regions.

More systematic research is needed into regional differences in options from coping with decreasing profitability of agriculture (intensification, diversification, pluriactivity, tourism in peripheral areas, recreation in urban areas etc), and need for more studies on spatial impact of processes causing loss of profitability, and the significance for this issue of the CAP.

(b) Substantive research themes

A preliminary point is that it is clear from analysis of the case studies and from other experiences during SPESP that a number of definitions of spatial planning terminology need to be worked out and interpretations agreed from the point of view of the different spatial planning cultures in Europe. This issue is discussed in the 2.1 summary report.

The two principle research methodologies proposed are

(1) to develop the analysis of typologies of territories by adopting a morphological definition of territory and of urban centres, and to test this alongside the more orthodox socio-economic definition of functional urban areas. This proposal was developed by the 2.2 working party meeting in Paris, November 1999. It was not possible within the framework of SPESP to apply the morphological approach, although it was agreed by the working party that this approach had potential merits.

(details from PHall/SD work)

(2) to continue with case-study research, the basis of the work of working group 2.3, but with a strongly developed structure. Case studies should be sought that are more highly targetted on seeking answers to specific questions. This means that much more specific parameters should be developed than was possible with the SPESP work, building directly on that experience. These parameters should include: precise guidance on spatial scale of territory to be studied, clear identification of the urban-rural dimension that each represents, a hypothesis to test based on this dimension and the urban-rural relationships that may be expected to exist. With case study-based research, especially in an international context, there is inevitably a tendency on the part of many participants to select cases that reflect success stories, thus putting them in a good light. Several NFPs may have done this implicitly. At least one adopted this as an explicit policy when selecting case studies. The parameters should include precise guidance on this point. Depending on the objectives of specific elements of future study programmes, it will be necessary to decide whether cases are to be of success stories, from which conclusions relating to advice and dissemination may be drawn., whether they should be of typical, or widely duplicated, practice, or whether the research objectives may be better served by studying policy failure and the lessons that this may

offer. The essential point is that cases are needed of the many different ways in which urban-rural relationships work out in different types of territory, to test specific hypotheses developed from the SPESP work undertaken so far.

Whenever any research with a cross-national comparative dimension is undertaken, especially if it is intended to lead to policy-transfer, it is essential to develop the conceptual framework to embrace the cultural and constitutional context, and recognise that straight transfer is a rare phenomenon in spatial planning, but that stimulation of a new idea from comparison of two or more existing situations is a much more realistic expectation.

There is a need to define the aspirations of spatial planning in different political contexts, and possibly test this in pilot programmes. ESPON can play a role in disseminating and communicating lessons from case studies, pilot projects etc. Case-study research has an important contribution to make. Research should focus on methods, indicators and policy instruments to enhance the capacity of spatial planning to evaluate regional development projects with respect to sustainable development and cohesion. This could support ESDP Action point 3: ESDP policy orientations in national spatial planning, although such research should also support regional-scale spatial planning.

Analysis needed of the role of urbanised areas, to explain why they are better performing than agglomerations, since this analysis could have considerable significance for EU spatial policy (from 1.2). Also evaluation of polycentric and monocentric regional spatial strategies (growth poles) in different contexts, analysis of urban-urban, urban-rural and rural-rural linkages, their contribution to balanced development, collaboration and institutional basis.

A systematic and theory-based study of forms and outcomes of intermunicipal cooperation, with more detailed analysis of factors explaining success or failure of cooperation, and pilot projects to test which incentives could act at a political level to promote coordination and integration of regional strategies, is required. This could be developed to support ESDP Tampere Action Programme Action 9: Future regions of Europe award.

Territorial Impact Assessment (ESDP #29, Tampere Action Programme Action 5) is a concept that is new to planning practice in several member-states, but there is experience to draw upon from other member-states, and elements of the concept may adopted in practice elsewhere, although not necessarily under this title. Consequently, it would be appropriate for ESPON to draw upon this experience and develop guidance on how to operationalise the procedure for spatial planning agencies and professional practitioners.

Research into the integration of spatial planning into the management of the structural funds and Community Initiatives (programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation), to support Action 1 of the Tampere ESDP Action Programme: ESDP policy orientations in mainstream structural fund programmes.

The SPESP programme has lacked case-studies reflecting problems of conservation and water supply in river basins (in areas at risk both of inundation and drought), which should be called for in the next study programme in view of the likely importance of this issue (see Action 10 of the Tampere Action Programme: integrated strategies for coastal regions). A similar remark could also be made about energy and coastal planning studies, in spite of the importance of the latter from both the economic and environmental points of view.

(c) Reviews of existing research and evaluation.

ESPON could usefully undertake a series of reviews of existing reports that have been prepared for the Commission and other bodies evaluating different programmes. This principle could possibly be extended to other transnational studies by other bodies, including the OECD.

Within DG REGIO, the evaluation reports for INTERREG IIC and TERRA programmes should be studied in order to extract and synthesise the lessons relating to urban-rural relationships. Valuable material may also be available from reports on URBAN, LEADER, RECITE and structural fund operations. Within other DGs, similar reports on transport, agriculture, environmental programmes etc may be similarly worth studying from the urban-rural spatial development perspective. In respect of the issue of data availability, the application of remote sensing technologies, such as that adopted by the MURBANDY (Monitoring Urban Dynamics) projects of the CEO, Ispra, should be discussed. At present, MURBANDY covers only selected major agglomerations, but this will no doubt be extended.

ANNEX I

Insert here the matrix developed by Andre Mueller and Angela Churie, sent separately by email.

ANNEX II

Issues identified at the working party meeting, Paris, April 1999.

a. Environment

- problems of fragile environments, coastal zones, mountain areas
- role of spatial planning to link environmental sector policies with social issues especially in rural and semiurban areas
- natural resources, water supply and waste disposal
- river basin areas as rural-urban policy areas

b. Transport and Trans-European Networks (TENs)

- airports and transport interchanges creating new 'edge cities' with substantial impact on settlement pressures and shopping provision
- role of spatial planning to link transport sector with community and social needs
- secondary networks to link main centres and their regions
- impact of telecommunications on transport and settlement
- specific problems of peripheral areas

- problems of transport dependency

c. Agriculture and CAP reforms

- response to problems of differentiation of rural areas and activities
- proposals by DG6 for Rural Development Plans (the so-called 'second pillar' of the CAP, for proposed Regulation see COM/98/158 final), need to support DG16 in providing basis for spatial perspective

d. Urban issues

- spatial agenda contributes to Actions proposed in document produced for Urban Forum (Vienna November 1998) *Sustainable urban development in the EU: a framework for action* (DGXVI, COM/98/605)
- concept of urban footprint in this document is example of urban-rural relationship

e. Tourism

- raises issues of urbanisation, spatial patterns of settlement, role in economy, water supply, capacity, waste disposal
- links to fragile environments issue (1, above)

f. Cohesion

- at level of EU as a whole
- within urban-rural territories at local and regional scales

g. Trans-boundary cooperation issues