Territorial Diversity as a challenge and opportunity

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Session 1:
New policy options for better economic performance

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The ESPON TeDi project

- Focus on opportunities for growth and sustainable development in areas with geographical specificities:
  - mountain areas,
  - islands,
  - sparsely populated areas
  - areas with high population density in peripheral position such as islands
Contrasted population density patterns

Disparate and internally contrasted case studies

Municipal population density (Inh/km², 2001)

- 0
- 0.5 - 5
- 5.1 - 10
- 10.1 - 20
- 20.1 - 30
- 30.1 - 40
- 40.1 - 50
- 50.1 - 100
- > 100

This map does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the ESPON Monitoring Committee.
Access to urban nodes: a critical parameter

Access to urban nodes

Number of Inhabitants of the Functional Urban Areas (FUA)

- > 8 million
- 1 - 5 million
- 250,000 - 1 million
- 50,000 - 250,000
- < 20,000

Corresponding potential commuting area

- around FUA > 8 million
- around FUA 1 - 5 million
- around FUA 250,000 - 1 million
- around FUA 50,000 - 250,000
- around FUA < 20,000
- Case study areas
- ESPON space outside case study areas
- Non ESPON space
Geographically specific ≠ peripheral

Overlay of mountain areas (DG REGIO Mountain Study, 2004) and Pentagon (ESPON 1.1.1)
Population increase and decline
Economic activities

Structure of the employment in the case study areas

Classification of the case studies by predominant employment sector
- Agriculture over-represented
- Fishing over-represented
- Mining and quarrying over-represented
- Manufacturing over-represented
- Construction over-represented
- Business activities, financial intermediation and electricity, gas and water supply over-represented
- Hotels and restaurants over-represented
- Health and social work, education and public administration over-represented

These maps do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the ESPON Monitoring Committee.

No data / no employees
ESPRON space outside case study areas
Non ESPRON space

Erik Gløersen - Nordregio
“Turning territorial diversity into strength”

The shared feature of TeDi case studies is that they national authorities characterise them as “specific”

The first challenge for Europe is to “handle the diversity of approaches of diversity”

Notions such as “mountains”, “islands” or “sparsely populated” provide a powerful first framework for this purpose

Main question: How to use these notions most efficiently?

→ How to translate the Green Paper slogan into concrete action?
Shared traits of TeDi case study areas

Not necessarily low economic and social performance in absolute terms
but perceived structural and permanent obstacles

All TeDi areas experience relative isolation
but their accessibility can be extremely variable

Most TeDi areas include small communities
but their development opportunities depend on the geographic context

→ Can/Should territorial diversity be measured? If yes, how?
A conceptual framework that need to be specified

(1) Level of performance ≠ Structural obstacles to growth

→ More than average scores ≠ good scores
→ Geographically specific area ≠ Lagging area

(2) Economic importance ≠ Economic weight

(3) Balanced, harmonious and sustainable development requires more than economic growth
→ geographic specificities may help identifying contradictions and mutually beneficial effects of different types of policies
The governance of geographically specific areas

Dealing with geographic specificities is often about creating new types of connections between areas
- Within regions
- Across regional and national boundaries

- Compensating for imbalances in flows
- Creating alliances through which actors can strengthen the robustness and resilience of their local communities
- Gaining greater weight in economic and political systems dominated by main urban areas

The critical issues at the European scale are:
- How to accompany these processes so as to promote European territorial cohesion and growth
- What are the appropriate scales of intervention?