

NORBA Nordic-Baltic Dialogues on Transnational Perspectives in Spatial Planning

Transnational Networking Activities 2013/4/X

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This report presents the **draft final** results of Transnational Networking Activities conducted within the framework of the ESPON 2013 Programme, partly financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

The partnership behind the ESPON Programme consists of the EU Commission and the Member States of the EU27, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. Each partner is represented in the ESPON Monitoring Committee.

This report does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the members of the Monitoring Committee.

Information on the ESPON Programme and projects can be found on www.espon.eu

The web site provides the possibility to download and examine the most recent documents produced by finalised and ongoing ESPON projects.

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A Executive summary

NORBA (Nordic-Baltic Dialogues on Transnational Perspectives in Spatial Planning), 2010-2012, was set up as a macro-regional project. The transnational project group comprised of six ESPON Contact Points (ECPs) from the Nordic and Baltic countries: Finland (Lead Partner), Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Estonia and Latvia.

The Nordic-Baltic area has a long tradition of co-operation, and the participating countries have much in common in terms of their spatial position and structure in Europe, even if the East/West setting is still visible in the Baltic Sea Region. This starting point was assumed to foster dissemination and capitalization of ESPON findings due to prevailing commonalities and relatively well-established communication links among various stakeholders. Secondly, the existing research traditions in the field of spatial and territorial development policy in the Nordic and Baltic countries were seen important points of reference to which ESPON results are related and compared when assessing their novelty and applicability as an evidence base for policy making. Thirdly, the underpinnings of the NORBA project included the assumption that the dissemination and capitalisation of ESPON findings should not be seen only as a short term, immediate delivery, but rather as a longer term process, requiring initiatives and communication with different actors and research trends in this diversified field.

Based on the above premises, NORBA has facilitated “transnational dialogues on spatial planning between policy-makers and practitioners, scientists and young academics and students in the Nordic-Baltic countries”. The activities have also involved relevant stakeholders outside this region and have been conducted in co-operation with various planning and policy organisations that are active in this field.

In practice, the strategy derived from the above mentioned underpinnings has been realized by organizing conferences and seminars with and for different partners and actors. These events have been forums of mutual learning, which – in addition to the dissemination of ESPON results – have provided various stakeholders with opportunities to express their ideas, problems and proposals regarding new ESPON projects. In addition to this

core activity of promoting dialogue, NORBA's work has comprised a project website, blunder-checks and biannual activity reports as well as administrative work that included communication with, and reporting to, the CU. - The link to the project website is: <http://www.rha.is/norba>

The first NORBA conference, "*Transnational perspectives on spatial planning – Experiences from the Nordic-Baltic countries. Nordic-Baltic ESPON Conference for Planners and Policy-makers*" was organized in co-operation with Nordregio (Nordic Centre for Spatial Development, www.nordregio.se) in Stockholm, 3-4 February 2011. Around 60 participants, policymakers and planners at national, regional and local levels as well as researchers took part in the conference, primarily from the Nordic-Baltic countries.

The NORBA/ESPON sessions for doctoral students, "*Zooming in on European Spatial Perspectives in the Baltic Sea Region*", were organized in connection with the Nordic Geographers Meeting (NGM) 2011 "Geographical Knowledge, Nature and Practice" in Roskilde May 25-26, 2011. Three out of the 60 sessions at this large conference focused on ESPON.

NORBA reached out to national research communities by cooperating with the NS-RSA (Nordic Section of the European Regional Science Association), by organizing a joint scientific seminar "*Nordic and Baltic Regions in a European Development and Policy Context*" in Oslo, March 14-15, 2012. This event was hosted by the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) at the Norwegian Research Park.

The NORBA final conference was organized in Jūrmala (Latvia) on August 30 – 31, 2012 and was attended by 100 participants. The main topics were territorial cohesion in the Baltic Sea Region, ESPON findings on key regional challenges: demography, urban regions, rural areas, and territorial governance.

NORBA conducted the blunder checks of 14 ESPON research reports. Co-operation with other ESPON ECPs and TNA projects also formed an integral element of the project. The Danish and Lithuanian ECPs could not join the NORBA proposal in autumn 2009 due to institutional constraints. In practice, however, these two ECPs co-operated with NORBA in several ways throughout the project.

NORBA's transnational approach helped to unpack the territorial development issues around the Baltic Sea, including the significant impact of the external border of the EU on peripheral border regions. The experiences from NORBA dialogues also support the view that much could be achieved by closer integration between the ESPON work and 'family' and established collaborative forums such as VASAB or CEMAT, which actually have a strong participation of practitioners and policy-makers.

In the early stages of NORBA, the potential uses of ESPON concepts, findings and data were analyzed by surveying whether ESPON material has found its way into the main national-level planning documents. Even if visions and perspectives in these documents have also seen an influx of 'European' planning concepts such as polycentricity, development zones or cross-border cooperation, the utilization of ESPON data and findings, particularly in terms of the 'spatial positioning' of national and regional territories, remains at a rudimentary level in the national planning documents and should be strengthened in the future.

NORBA succeeded in engaging a variety of academic disciplines in the ESPON debate, a target that should also be considered at the European, transnational level. Processes towards a generational shift have also been initiated. The events organized attracted a significant number of young researchers from various higher education institutions. They will complement the ESPON 'old guard' that continues actively to contribute to the progress of European territorial research.

Generally, experiences from the NORBA conferences has shown that the general interest in ESPON's research on European territorial development is high not only among the individuals attending the conferences but also among the partner institutions that helped organize and contributed to the conferences, such as Nordregio and the NS-RSA. The added value gained from NORBA's work and its contribution to a macro-regional approach particularly proved to be the provision of a forum for zooming-in into the vast repository of knowledge and information that is ESPON. The conferences, attended by altogether approximately 250 people, made it possible to filter and selectively discuss ESPON evidence and typologies in-depth according to their relevance for the Nordic-Baltic region.

The integration of ESPON results and findings in national and regional planning processes would enable local, regional and national actors to gain an understanding of macro-level or 'external' developments for a better understanding of their 'internal' development, which, in turn, would prevent a situation where they work in a vacuum or in isolation. The practice of 'spatial positioning' is closely related to these aspects. Experience has also shown that bottom-up and 'uploading' processes, i.e. the feeding of national and sub-national interests, concerns, approaches, etc. into the European debate and territorial research activities, attracts significant attention. The strong interest in Priority 2 'Targeted Analyses' projects, which also became evident in all NORBA events, is clear an evidence of national and sub-national actors' desire to influence ESPON activities.

The NORBA experience has also shown that the role of the ECPs is of increasing importance in providing an interface between the ESPON 'superstructure' and national as well as sub-national actors. The ECPs have sound experience in filtering ESPON results for national consumption as well as critically evaluating the results from national perspectives.

B Report

1 Introduction

NORBA (Nordic-Baltic Dialogues on Transnational Perspectives in Spatial Planning), 2010-2012, was set up as a macro-regional project. The transnational project group comprised of six ESPON Contact Points (ECPs) from the Nordic and Baltic countries: Finland (Lead Partner), Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Estonia and Latvia. One Nordic country (Denmark) and one Baltic country (Lithuania) could not join the consortium due to the fact that their ECPs were not formally nominated at the time of preparing the project proposal in autumn 2009.

2 Aims, Objectives and Strategy

The Nordic-Baltic area has a long tradition of co-operation, and the participating countries have much in common in terms of their spatial position and structure in Europe, even if the East-West setting is still visible in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). This starting point was assumed to foster dissemination and capitalization of ESPON findings due to prevailing commonalities and relatively well-established communication links among various stakeholders, including, for instance, VASAB (Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea Region, www.vasab.org), the Nordic Senior Officials' Committee for Regional Policy (NÄRP), and the Nordic Section of the Regional Science Association (NS-RSA, www.ns-rsa.dk). In order to utilize the potential (and already realized) contribution of ESPON results, the project proposal emphasized the need to investigate in more detail how the European and international surroundings and outlooks have been defined and interpreted in key planning and policy documents in these countries.

Secondly, it was argued in the project proposal that the existing research traditions in the field of spatial and territorial development policy in the Nordic and Baltic countries are important points of reference to which ESPON results are related and compared when assessing their novelty and applicability as an evidence-base for

policy-making. These traditions, albeit relatively strong, are somewhat fragmented. A reason for this is that with the exception of the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR), there are no dedicated national policy-oriented research institutes in the field (such as BBR in Germany or DIACT/DATAR in France) in the NORBA countries, but instead, a number of smaller units of basic and applied research. However, long-standing institutionalized co-operation in policy-oriented spatial and regional research has been a distinctive Nordic feature: first, embodied by three separate Nordic organizations, and since the late 1990s, through the work of Nordregio (Nordic Centre for Spatial Development, see www.nordregio.se). This organization, based in Stockholm, conducts spatial and regional research with high policy relevance. Interestingly, it serves a dual role, providing research inputs and policy advice to Nordic ministerial and regional actors on the one hand, but also serving as a Nordic voice in European research-based debates on spatial and regional development and policy (see, for example, Damsgaard et al 2008). From the NORBA project's point of view, Nordregio's experience and expertise in this field is seen as indisputably relevant.

Thirdly, the underpinnings of the NORBA project included the assumption that the dissemination and capitalisation of ESPON findings should not be seen only as a short term, immediate delivery, but rather as a longer term process, requiring initiatives and communication with different actors and research trends in this diversified field. In practical terms, this emphasizes the need to facilitate dialogues and pay special attention to young scholars (which as such is not new in ESPON). Of the disciplinary research fields, geography and regional studies/science were seen as particularly relevant.

Based on the premises outlined above, NORBA has aimed – following the wording of the proposal – at facilitating “transnational dialogues on spatial planning between policy-makers and practitioners, scientists and young academics and students in the Nordic-Baltic countries”. The activities have also involved relevant stakeholders outside this region and have been conducted in cooperation with various planning and policy organizations that are active in this field.

In practice, the strategy derived from the above mentioned assumptions has been realized by organizing conferences and seminars with and for different partners and actors. These events

have been forums of mutual learning, which – in addition to the dissemination of ESPON results – have provided various stakeholders with opportunities to express their ideas, problems and proposals regarding new ESPON projects. In addition to this core activity of promoting dialogue, NORBA's work has comprised a project website, blunder-checks and biannual activity reports as well as administrative work that included communication with, and reporting to, the CU.

In the following, the above mentioned specific actions are reported in detail in relation to each work package.

3 Activities

Work Package 1

WP 1's Lead Partner (ECP Finland, Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland) was responsible for the coordination and communication of the project's activities. It also consolidated project partners' activity reports and submitted them biannually to the ESPON CU. The Lead Partner was also in charge of the project's finances. Overall, the project group, with one ECP representative from each participating country and the financial manager, organized the project as a genuinely transnational activity. None of the activities carried out in Work Package 2 was a sole responsibility of a certain ECP, but they were planned and realized as joint efforts.

Five progress reports were submitted on time for the years 2010–2012. The last and final progress report is due by the end of the project period.

Altogether 10 project meetings, mostly linked to ESPON seminars and NORBA events, have been held, all of which were attended by representatives from all partners (Alcala des Henares, Riga and Liege in 2010; Stockholm, Gödöllő, Copenhagen and Krakow in 2011, and Oslo, Aalborg and Jūrmala in 2012). The last project meeting will be held in Pafos (Cyprus) in December 2012. With the exception of the Latvian ECP, the persons responsible for the project's activities (that is, the ECP members of the NORBA group) were in office throughout the whole project period. The financial

managers of all project partners have attended the ESPON Financial Managers' training.



Figure 1. The NORBA team relaxing after the successful final conference in Jurmala, Latvia, August 30-31, 2012.

From the left: Heikki Eskelinen (Finland), Mats Johansson (Sweden), Timo Hirvonen (Finland), Zane Leščinska (Latvia), Grétar Thór Eythórsson (Iceland), Antti Roose (Estonia) and Olaf Foss (Norway).

Work Package 2

This work package included the actual content and main activities of the NORBA project.

WP2a. Project Website

The Icelandic ECP (Grétar Thór Eythórsson) has been, together with staff from the University of Akureyri Research Center, responsible for designing, developing and continuously updating the project website for NORBA. The link to the project website is: <http://www.rha.is/norba>.

The website presents the project in general, introduces its partners and announces information about the activities implemented by the project. As part of this activity, the presentations and reports from all workshops and conferences implemented were made accessible. Through this, the ESPON results presented at NORBA

conferences have been disseminated through the webpage. The website is developed in a way that the material presented does not overlap with the ESPON website. Also, the division of labour between the national websites of the NORBA ECPs (Finland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Estonia and Latvia) and the NORBA website is clear.

The main page (<http://www.rha.is/norba>) provides a general description of the project, including continuously updated news. The contact information and institutional descriptions of all the six partners (ECPs) in the NORBA project are found on a separate page.

The subpage NORBA ACTIVITIES contains links to information on all the events organized by the project. Both the announcements of events and the reports on them are found on this page. Links to the presentations were made accessible soon after the conferences. In the case of the conference titled "*Nordic and Baltic Regions in a European Development and Policy Context*" (Oslo, 14–15 March 2012), the NORBA webpage has been linked to the co-organizer's webpage (NIBR, the Norsk Institutt for By- og Regionforskning). This link can be found at: <http://www.nibr.no/en/news/other-nibr-news/seminar-norba-rsa.aspx>.

The reports of the NORBA main events can be found on the 'Publications' page. The four reports concern the conference in Stockholm in February 2011, the young scholars' sessions in Roskilde in May 2011, the research conference in Oslo in March 2012, and the final conference in Jūrmala in August 2012. In addition, the NORBA website provides links to other Transnational Networking Activity projects under the ESPON program.



Figure 2. The main page of the NORBA website (www.norba.is/norba)

The number of visits to the NORBA website from its establishment until the 1st of September 2012 was 766. The number of visits to the NIBR website, where material from the NORBA conference is located has been 79 up until now. This means that the NORBA website and websites related to NORBA events have had so far 845 views.

WP 2b: Conference in Stockholm in February 2011

Context

Transnational approaches have grown in importance in spatial planning and territorial development policy at different scales. This is clearly visible in increased cross-border and transnational cooperation within the planning and policy arena between individual countries and in macro-regions in Europe. As an important facilitator, the ESPON 2013 Programme supports these activities “by (1) providing comparable information, evidence, analyses and scenarios on territorial dynamics and (2) revealing territorial capital and potentials for development of regions and larger territories contributing to European competitiveness, territorial cooperation and a sustainable and balanced development” (see www.espon.eu).

Approach and focus

In order to unravel and evaluate the relevance and potential of ESPON results for the Nordic-Baltic countries, the NORBA project, in cooperation with Nordregio (Nordic Centre for Spatial Development, www.nordregio.se) arranged a conference in Stockholm, 3–4 February 2011 titled “*Transnational perspectives on spatial planning – Experiences from the Nordic-Baltic countries. Nordic-Baltic ESPON Conference for Planners and Policy-makers*”. Around 60 participants, policymakers and planners at national, regional and local levels, as well as researchers, took part in the conference, primarily from the Nordic-Baltic countries. Nordregio’s contribution to the event as the co-organizer was important in terms of both scholarly inputs and material resources. Moreover, information was also provided in co-operation with the ESPON Co-ordination Unit (CU) on how to access and utilize the findings and evidence produced by the ESPON 2013 Programme. The conference was organized in the form of keynote speeches and panel discussions.

The aim of the conference was to disseminate ESPON results by involving policy makers, practitioners and scientists, according to the NORBA proposal, with “a focus on the underlying general underpinnings of ESPON, i.e. the policy objectives of territorial cohesion as well as transnational planning and policy perspectives”. In addition, the aim was to provide participants with the opportunity to express their ideas and suggestions for further research initiatives. By providing the Nordic-Baltic community with

ESPON information elaborated from transnational points of view, this first NORBA conference aimed at contributing to a mutual learning process between the Nordic-Baltic countries and ESPON.

The conference programme was organized under two main headings. During the first day, the findings of transnational ESPON projects that were seen to bear particular relevance to Nordic and Baltic countries were discussed. This part of the conference was summarized in the question – “what can ESPON do for your region”? The second day of the conference focused on spatial planning in the Nordic and Baltic countries. The keynote speaker was Niels Boje Groth (University of Copenhagen) who surveyed “outlooks towards Europe in national planning of the Northern and Baltic countries”, that is, he compared the positioning of these countries in national planning documents (if such exist) and explored how this setting has changed over the course of time. Subsequently, spatial planning and development policy in these countries were discussed on the basis of the introductory speeches of national experts. This approach was summarized in the question; “what can your region do for ESPON”?

The key themes of the conference can be summarized in the following bullet points:

- Understanding national, regional and local development trends, strengths and weaknesses in Nordic-Baltic countries in the light of ESPON findings
- ESPON in evidence-based spatial and territorial policy in the Nordic-Baltic countries at macro-regional, national and regional levels
- Applying planning concepts on urban and regional development fostered by international research and experiences. For this, the so-called Europeanization processes in spatial planning in the Nordic and Baltic countries are of great importance
- Messages of the ESPON scenarios concerning the Nordic-Baltic countries

First Day – Programme and Speeches

During the first day, six key-note speeches and one panel discussion were held. The key-note speeches were based on results from different ESPON-projects or derived from the themes related to the 5th Cohesion Report. The opening addresses by Heikki Eskelinen (University of Eastern Finland/NORBA, Finnish ECP), Mats Johansson (main organizer, KTH/NORBA, Swedish

ECP) and Ole Damsgaard (Director of Nordregio) highlighted the importance of dissemination activities with regard to ESPON activities but also the importance of inputs from the practitioners' point of view.

The keynote speaker Peter Billing (ESPON CU), in his speech "*ESPON 2013 on the road – progress and future activities*", introduced the general background of the ESPON Programme, and underlined the purposes of this kind of research for policy makers and for participants. Briefly, the aim of ESPON is to support policy development and to contribute to an enhanced competitiveness of European regions and cities. Furthermore, ESPON also provides evidence and policy suggestions on how to rationalize the spending of EU funds.

The second keynote speaker Jean Peyrony (European Commission, DG Regio) focused on economic, social and territorial cohesion, and discussed how the EU as well as national and regional governments have contributed to this process. According to him, better coordination between regions is needed, and both national and regional development policies are important contributors to the process of shaping the future of European regions. The presentation ended in an exploration of the link between Cohesion Policy and the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Alexandre Dubois (Nordregio) presented "*Spatial scenarios for Europe and the Nordic/Baltic countries*" on the basis of the ESPON 2006 Scenario project (*Spatial scenarios in relation to the ESDP and EU Cohesion Policy*). He claimed that development has its own momentum but policies and policy-makers can have impact on this development. The ESPON scenario project provided different spatial scenarios for the European territory, exploring alternative directions of possible trends and driving forces related to the future territorial development of the EU. Overall, the project contributes to knowledge about territorial structures, trends, perspectives and policy impacts in an enlarging European Union. The speech by Dubois ended in a presentation of a long term scenario for the VASAB area.

Grétar Thór Eythórsson (University of Akureyri/NORBA) presented results from two research projects investigating territorial diversity in northern Iceland linked to ESPON TEDI project (*Territorial Diversity in Europe*). His presentation included detailed descriptions of living conditions and challenges in a planning

context. Eythórsson argued that for understanding territorial diversity and designing policies that are adapted to the particular preconditions of individual regions, it is necessary to consider their development processes rather than looking at statistical facts. In addition, a more in-depth understanding of promoting alternative lifestyles as an instrument of territorial cohesion is of utmost importance.

Johanna Roto of Nordregio, in her speech “*Future migratory movements – concentration or de-concentration*”, gave a summary of results from the ESPON DEMIFER project (*Demographic and migratory flows affecting European regions and cities*), particularly from the perspective of Nordic-Baltic countries. This project has – among other things – investigated ageing and accessibility as challenges for regions. The most obvious problems concerning population development in Europe are caused by the fact that one fourth of all NUTS2 regions experience population decline. The main demographic changes within the European space are slowing population growth, ageing and intra- as well as extra-European migration. Roto also presented four different scenarios on total population and labour force until 2050. The main conclusion was that demography cannot be considered in isolation and as separate from policies such as housing, labour markets, integration of migrants, education, innovations and environmental quality.

Andrew Copus (UHI, UK / Nordregio, Sweden) presented the main findings from the EDORA project (*European Development Opportunities in Rural Areas*), in which development opportunities in different types of rural areas were investigated and a new rural typology for Europe was created. As a whole, the EDORA project provided evidence on the development opportunities of diverse types of European rural areas and revealed options for improving their competitiveness by analyzing regional strengths through territorial cooperation. In particular, Andrew Copus highlighted land-based industries that create spiral effects of decline and disadvantages which are commonly associated with geographical remoteness. According to the EDORA findings, this connection still holds true in some parts of rural Europe, but not everywhere.

What is said above means that a new rural typology should go beyond the traditional urban-rural dimension, highlight the inadequacy of common and misleading stereotypes about rural areas, create a simple but meaningful (macro)regional framework

for analyzing rural trends, and also help policymakers to 'benchmark' their regions in a broad European context. According to Andrew Copus, an additional dilemma is that the EDORA structural typology cannot be strictly a typology of purely rural areas. The first reason is of theoretical character and stipulates that rural areas do not function separately from adjacent urban areas. The second one is practical and stipulates that the smallest possible data units are NUTS 3 regions resulting in the fact that these areas also contain sizable towns or cities. Given these reasons, the EDORA project provides a typology of intermediate and predominantly rural regions and covers the whole ESPON Space.

The first day ended with a panel debate titled "*What can ESPON do for your region?*" chaired by Lisa Van Well (Nordregio). The panelists were Sverker Lindblad (Swedish Member of ESPON MC), Ole Damsgaard, Peter Billing, Jean Peyrony, Andrew Copus and Odd Godal (Norwegian member of ESPON MC), as participants. Lisa Van Well began the debate by asking the panel participants what ESPON *can* do and what ESPON *cannot* (be expected to) do for the European regions.

Peter Billing underlined that ESPON projects can deliver synthesis results for regions in a larger context, which is important in comparative analysis and policy development. However, a stakeholder should not expect ESPON to deliver explicit policy recommendations and be a single reference point in regional development work. Jean Peyrony agreed with Billing and underscored that ESPON delivers a macro-level perspective on the micro-level. He also stressed that regions learn from each other through ESPON. Ole Damsgaard continued that ESPON can provide a regional overview to put regions into an EU context rather than national or more restricted contexts.

Andrew Copus argued that for most people ESPON is associated with maps and indicators, which is a fairly inductive approach implying few real policy recommendations or models. In the EDORA project, they tried to have a more deductive approach, bridging empirical results with science and policy. This is the strength of ESPON, i.e. to be a link between the academy and the policy sphere.

Odd Godal emphasized then that ESPON is a network for data and information sharing as well as a framework for various

networking activities in which researchers exchange experiences. Sverker Lindblad underlined that ESPON can provide a comparative view on regional development in a larger context. However, the usefulness of ESPON is rather limited because few projects are demand-driven. It is thus more difficult to make use of results from ESPON applied research projects as compared to Priority 2 projects and other applied research projects from the OECD, for example, which have a clear demand framework.

Lisa Van Well continued by asking what regions can learn from each other through ESPON. Andrew Copus argued that they have not seen any real cases where regions have learned anything from the research conducted within the ESPON programme. Sverker Lindblad filled in by arguing that having dialogues and using ESPON results can be important in development work; however, to attain this, mutual learning is needed.

Van Well also asked whether ESPON provides evidence for all regions in the EU, whether ESPON is relevant for rural as well as city regions or functional urban areas as well as administrative regions. Sverker Lindblad responded that one problem with ESPON is the mismatch between what is conducted within the ESPON programme and the real challenges that regions are facing. It is hard to see a strong link between ESPON and stakeholders; there is instead a widespread need to properly interpret the results and main messages from the ESPON work and reports.



Figure 3. Lisa Van Well from Nordregio chaired the panel discussion on the first day. The participants were from the left Ole Damsgaard (Nordregio), Jean Peyrony (DG Regio), Andrew Copus (UHI and Nordregio) Odd Godal (Norwegian member of ESPON MC), Sverker Lindblad (Swedish member of ESPON MC) and Peter Billing (ESPON CU).

Van Well rounded off the debate by asking the panel for the main messages from the first day of the NORBA conference and some recommendations to improve the work conducted within ESPON. Jean Peyrony stated that there is a need to improve the link

between ESPON and other EU programmes and to facilitate a constructive and useful work of the ECPs. Andrew Copus said that the main point from the first day of the NORBA conference reflects DG Regio's view: ESPON should have specific policy relevance. Sverker Lindblad suggested that ESPON could work more on the dissemination of ESPON results and improve their analytical approach through, for example, using functional regions in their reporting instead of the common NUTS classification of regions

Second Day – Programme and Speeches

Folke Snickars (KTH, Head of the Swedish ESPON Network) welcomed all the participants to a new session with a focus on *international aspects in national and regional planning*.

Nils Boje Groth (University of Copenhagen) started with a survey and analysis of different approaches to national spatial planning under the title "*Outlooks towards Europe in national planning of the Northern and Baltic countries – an overview*".

Outlooks towards Europe in national planning of the Northern and Baltic countries – an overview

Against the background of increasing Europeanization and institutionalisation of spatial planning (see, for example, Williams (1996), Faludi (2007), Waterhout (2008), Böhme (2002) and Halkier (2009)), but bearing in mind that considerable variations in planning traditions and practices remain in the Nordic-Baltic countries¹, the NORBA project team decided to conduct a concise study on the content of national spatial planning documents in the NORBA countries. The study was conducted by Niels Boje Groth, senior researcher at the University of Copenhagen, and focussed specifically on the question whether and how national planning documents make use of new European concepts, methodologies and data for spatial planning and development, derived from, for example, ESPON, the ESDP or other fora of international co-operation.

As mentioned above, the Nordic-Baltic national planning landscape is varied. Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Latvia have produced national planning documents. Some countries are merging regional policy and spatial planning (e.g. Finland), some

¹ The VASAB compendium on planning systems in the BSR provided an overview (Committee for the Spatial Development of the Baltic Sea Region, 2000) and Böhme (Böhme, 2002) provided an in-depth study on the planning systems in the Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland.

keep the two disciplines apart (DK), some countries do not conduct spatial planning at the national level (Norway), and some countries have set up a new policy field on integrated planning for sustainability, regional development and spatial planning (Latvia). In order to facilitate the document review carried out by Niels Boje Groth, the NORBA partners provided the respective national policy or planning documents showing a spatial orientation and an international perspective (for a list of consulted planning documents, see Table 1).

The results of the document analysis provide some very interesting insights into the general and more specific evolution of national planning documents in the NORBA area, including the following:

Firstly, what characterises Nordic-Baltic national planning documents from about 1990 onwards is the turn away from plans towards perspectives or visions. Rather than aiming for absolute and strictly defined goals regarding the future of urban systems, the national development perspectives develop visions that are more openly defined and designed to mobilise and include stakeholders. Visions are generally expected to be realized by (soft) means based on potentials that are inherent and specific to a given region or city. The uniqueness of a single urban or regional space, and the diversity amongst them, is promoted by these perspectives, rather than their general functionality and even development. This shift in planning outlook and methodology is closely connected to the shift from state regimes focusing on welfare to state regimes focusing on competition. Generally, development perspective and visions deal with typologies of urban systems and landscapes, relations mediated by infrastructure as well as cooperation between cities, neighbouring regions as well as cross-border regions, and potentials such as 'development corridors', 'centres' and 'development zones'. Hierarchical and functional relations are emphasised.

Secondly, the increasing importance of visions and perspectives as planning tools emphasises the introduction or adoption of new planning concepts such as polycentricity, development zones or cross-border cooperation. Polycentricity is both a description for the current state of urban systems as well as a vision for forming new and stronger urban (poly-)centres based on the joining of forces of two or more neighbouring cities. If located along a national major transport axis, such systems may be described as potential development zones. Comparing, for example, the Danish and the Finnish development perspectives, an interesting diversity in the use of the concept is revealed. The Danish national reports (DK 1997 and DK 2000) introduce national centres that consist of cooperating neighbouring cities, whereas the Finnish national perspective from 1995 introduces corridors of cooperation that are further developed in the follow-up document from 2006 (FI 2006) into nationwide cooperation of networked centres. In both countries, urban cooperation is based upon complementary of urban assets, so central to polycentricity.

Thirdly, the national development perspectives reveal some prospects for developing further the planning discipline in the Nordic-Baltic countries. This relates to the fact that one of the most characteristic features is the mapping of national visions and perspectives in increasingly international contexts. Large national urban centers are supposed to cooperate or compete with urban centers in other countries. In a similar fashion, national main traffic corridors are supposed to connect with international corridors, notably the European TEN networks. As a result, the geographic agenda is no longer limited to the national territory, but broadened to include transnational relations and geographies. In the early days of the ESDP, Williams (1996) saw geography as crucial factor for setting the agenda of development perspectives. He called the process of identifying prospective functional geographies between stakeholders and the outside world 'spatial positioning' and saw it as a most important tool for 'identifying opportunities, comparative advantages and possibilities on the basis of which new links and relationships could be developed and strategic policies formulated'. The study emphasizes that the current use of spatial positioning in the national development perspectives is far from making full use its potentials. Spatial positioning is rather restricted to include access to urban systems of neighboring countries and regions. A more proactive use and genuinely European approach could be greatly facilitated by ESPON's mapping of regional potentials in certain socio-economic sectors, identifying, for example regions where the use of renewables in total final electricity consumption is high. Utilizing this knowledge, regions and their economic actors could engage in transnational cooperation either based on 'regional' proximity (the BSR) or based upon 'functional' proximity (across Europe). This spatial positioning is what could be developed in concerted action between ESPON and the relevant countries, or by networks of countries.

Lastly, the study provided some insights into the relevance and use of ESPON data in national planning. It goes without saying that all national development perspective relied heavily upon national data. In cases where international data is used, usually such data are from sources especially relevant to the topics at play. The Stockholm perspective (SE 2010) made use of EU data on the European Innovation Scoreboard. The Danish national report (DK 1997) made extensive use of maps from the preparatory work for the ESDP. But no use of ESPON data has been reported or observed. This implies that ESPON cannot compete with the detailed and tailored analytic data on urban regional profiles and functional specialisation as conducted by the aforementioned Finnish and Danish national reports. However, ESPON data seems to be ripe with information useful for identifying spatial positioning of regions showing the same kind of potentials, as explained above. Crucial is, however, to make the step from observation to action. Some proactive measures need to be taken within the framework of ESPON conferences, for example, to promote the use of ESPON findings in processes of spatial positioning.

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Table 1 List of consulted planning documents

DENMARK	SWEDEN	FINLAND	ESTONIA	LATVIA	BSR
1992 Denmark towards 2018 (1992)	Sweden 2009 – proposal for a vision (2000)	Land use & spatial structure in 2017 (1995)	National Spatial Plan 2010 (2000)	Sustainable Develop- ment Strategy of Latvia until 2030 (2010)	Long term perspec- tive for the territorial develop- ment of the Baltic Sea Region 2030
Denmark and European Planning Policy (1997)	A national strategy for regional competitive- ness, entrepreneur- ship and employment 2007-2013 (2006)	Competitiveness, welfare and eco- efficiency (2006)	Sustainable Estonia 21 (2005)		
Local identity and new challenges (2000)	Regional development plan for the Stockholm Region (2010)	Finland's Regional Development Strategy 2020 (2010)	Regional develop- ment strategy of Estonia 2005-2015 (2005)		
Balanced development in Denmark (2003)					
The new map of Denmark (2006)					

After this survey of spatial planning at national levels, the country-specific spatial planning and policy strategies were discussed by national and local experts in detail. These experiences were further taken up in panel discussions.

Carl Johan Engström (KTH, Sweden), in his speech titled “*The need for interplay between international and national planning perspectives – reflections from a local perspective*”, gave concrete examples on how the municipality of Uppsala, his former employer, has worked to integrate different perspectives in spatial planning. First of all, planning is mainly a task for municipalities working in new realities. The focus of regional policy has changed from balancing development through equalization to regional development policy based on the strengths of each region. Today, regional development also mainly takes place in urban core areas and focuses on accessibility, urban regeneration and city networks. In Uppsala, different spatial perspectives have been utilized; ESPON results, however, have not been used. The focus has been rather on national perspectives. In his view, there is an urgent need to develop an organized international interplay between EU spatial planning and EU urban policy from a local perspective.

Timo Turunen (Ministry of the Environment, Finland), under the title “*Finnish planning meets Europe*”, discussed how spatial planning in Finland has developed since the middle of the 1990s. The shift from a pure national to a more integrated perspective implies that Finnish spatial planning also has paid attention to the integration of Finland with other countries. He argued that Finland has good opportunities to achieve a polycentric development by utilizing the strengths of different regions, and the existing location patterns and infrastructure. An essential ingredient is that specialized centres of know-how and economic activities in different parts of Finland should be built up as international and national focal points. In addition, Timo Turunen emphasized that an integral part of this polycentric strategy is that the Helsinki region should be developed as a European metropolitan area in a Baltic Sea context in order to support development in other parts of Finland.

Inguna Urtane (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Latvia) started the ‘Baltic session’ by introducing how Latvia has developed the current regional planning concept. Formerly, regional planning included too many fragmented

priorities and overlapping proposals. More recently, based on a reflection on European practices, a spatial planning strategy has been constructed and adopted, and it is regarded as a good step towards an integrated perspective in the future planning. In addition, the national development plan “*Sustainable Development Strategy Latvia 2030*” was approved by the Latvian Parliament in June 2010. Reflecting on ESPON, Urtane stated that ESPON’s results have been too complex from the perspective of this work.

Tavo Kikas (Ministry of Internal Affairs, Estonia), in his speech “*Linking the Estonian national spatial plan Estonia 2030+ with the European and Baltic spatial strategies*”, firstly introduced the planning system in Estonia. It consists of four levels – national, regional as well as general and detailed plans at a municipality level. Next he highlighted the aim to link the Estonian vision with the European and Baltic spatial strategies, including the integrated development of settlement structures and nationwide infrastructures by also taking into account regional specificities.

According to Kikas, VASAB has been a useful source of perspectives and inputs for the national plan of Estonia. Nevertheless, such planning documents cannot be used to understand what is going on inside Estonia and in the development work within Estonia. Instead, they should be considered as complementary contributors of new ideas. In addition, Kikas emphasized that the Estonian development planning is still in progress, and that it is seen as important to position Estonia in a wider (Baltic and European) context.

“*The development of regional planning in Lithuania*” was the heading of Marija Burinskiene’s (Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Lithuania) speech on how regional planning in Lithuania has developed. There are plans at four levels in Lithuania: national plans, county plans, municipality plans, and plans organized by private and legal entities. Concerning official regional policies, there are, firstly, EU Cohesion Policy contributing to Lithuania’s reaching average economic development levels in the EU, and secondly, the national regional policy in order to implement this policy in the regions facing the most serious economic or social problems and to create programmes to help these regions catch up. Strategic provisions of Lithuanian national policy are incorporated into the EU’s structural support for national regional policy

Marija Burinskiene emphasized the importance of integrating different plans and actors in order to achieve synergies. She, nevertheless, argued that there have been some problems in developing efficient plans in Lithuania. Therefore, it is important to integrate different planning perspectives in future planning contexts and analyses.

The conference ended with the panel debate “*The need for international aspects in regional planning and policies*” chaired by Folke Snickars. The panel discussants were Heikki Eskelinen, Niels Boje Groth, Christer Bengs (SLU, Sweden and Aalto University, Finland), Tavo Kikas and Inguna Urtane. Folke Snickars started up the concluding debate by asking the participants to reflect on (1) the most useful new knowledge in spatial planning introduced in this meeting, (2) how to implement planning visions and concepts, and (3) whether ESPON can contribute to encounter concentration of forces in the Cohesion Policy, and if the EU’s Cohesion Policy is an effective way to deal with these future challenges.

Groth argued that the topics of discussion have not changed since ESPON started. For instance, questions like how a stakeholder can and should utilize ESPON results are still much debated. Snickars asked why it is difficult to achieve progress on this. Christer Bengs stated that one reason is that the applied research conducted in the ESPON programme lacks academic reliability, i.e. the quality is not good enough to be used in real planning contexts, especially when academic research is available. Another reason, in Bengs’s reading, could be that politicians are more interested in the decision-making procedures than facts about challenges and potentials. Groth added that ESPON results are not straightforward enough to be used in practice, and an important outcome of the NORBA conference has been the experiences expressed about the difficulties in implementing visions and plans.

Bengs continued that the main idea behind ESPON is not to produce new and interesting results, i.e. new insights, and to be applicable but to integrate researchers and to create a social arena for researchers in spatial planning in Europe. This has been revealed over these two days and is an important outcome from the NORBA conference. In his view, ESPON is simply isolated from the real development work and it has become an ‘island’ working on the production of results for its own group of people.

In contrast, Kikas underlined that we have seen how ESPON can support thinking on spatial planning in various countries, and provide examples on the development models that are relevant to work with. Nevertheless, there is a lack of understanding between different planning perspectives. On her part, Urtane highlighted that ESPON has an impact on national and regional planning by providing inputs concerning which priorities are possible to work with, what tools to use and what to focus on in different planning procedures. This is useful and contributes to more effective ways of working with future challenges.

Eskelinen positioned the role of NORBA in the preceding debate by emphasizing that a macro-regional level is important in assessing the utilization of research results, and linking them with the actual practice of planning and policy-making.

Snickars closed the panel discussion by thanking the participants for an inspiring discussion and left the final words to Mats Johansson. He reminded the audience once again that this conference was the first in a series of the NORBA conferences.

WP 2c: ESPON student sessions at Nordic Geographers Meeting in Roskilde in May 2011

Introduction

Student (or young scholars') sessions were already an integral part of the dissemination activities of the ESPON 2006 Programme. As argued above, an important underlying assumption of the NORBA project has been that the utilization of ESPON should not be seen entirely as a short term exercise with immediate impacts, but as being in practice intertwined with the fundamental question of how new concepts and perspectives can gradually be adopted into use and integrated with the existing knowledge that already exists in the field. Against this background, a dialogue with doctoral students in spatial and territorial research is of obvious importance.

According to the NORBA project proposal, the (doctoral) student session was planned to be arranged as part of the EURA (European Urban Research Association) in Copenhagen. This turned out to be impossible due to the timing of the conference, i.e. overlapping with the Midsummer weekend which would have made recruiting participants impossible in some NORBA countries. Subsequently, the NORBA/ESPON session "*Zooming in on*

European Spatial Perspectives in the Baltic Sea Region” was organized in connection with the Nordic Geographers Meeting (NGM) 2011 “*Geographical Knowledge, Nature and Practice*” in Roskilde May 25–26, 2011. The NGM conference represents a well-established Nordic forum in spatial research that attracted 237 attendants in 2011. Three out of the 60 sessions at the conference focused on ESPON. Approximately 20 participants from the conference joined these ESPON sessions.

The NORBA project supported the participation of young researchers and PhD students from Latvia, Finland, Estonia and Iceland at the NGM 2011 conference, thereby also facilitating networking amongst their peers. In order to be eligible for the support, an applicant was required to be a PhD student or working as a post-doc researcher at a Nordic or Baltic university or research institute. Applicants submitted abstracts to the NGM 2011 ESPON sessions proposing a topic related to strategic planning or territorial development policy. A panel consisting of members of the peer reviewers and the NORBA project selected highly qualified young or early-career scholars exclusively based on the quality of the abstract.

Programme

The NGM 2011 ESPON sessions consisted of the following three elements:

1. Two keynote speaker presentations on macro-regional spatial trends and discussions on the findings of ESPON projects bearing in mind Nordic-Baltic focus and circumstances – Professor Jacek Zaucha (Poland) on ESPON policy support and VASAB policies in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) and Dr Daniel Rauhut (Sweden) on BSR internal and external migration.
2. Presentations by 8 young researchers and PhD students (from Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Iceland) on their research projects related to ESPON themes of territorial development and cohesion.
3. Information on the ESPON 2013 Programme, latest programme developments and events, as well as on further ESPON related research topics and directions.

The following research themes focusing on Nordic-Baltic countries in the light of ESPON findings were discussed in the sessions:

territorial policies and forecasting, trends in city-regions, and migration and mobility.

Jacek Zaucha (University of Gdansk, Poland) in his keynote *"Implementation of territorial policies at the Baltic Sea Region level"* underlined that VASAB is not overburdened with many formal procedures, and its lean structures and small budget helps to focus on strategic issues as well as finding the right focus. VASAB's underlying vision is one of sustainable, balanced and harmonious spatial development in the BSR, and it can be seen as a key predecessor to the EU Strategy for the BSR. Zaucha also discussed VASAB interrelations to Interreg and other regional initiatives and programmes. In the second part of his presentation, he related and contextualised the ESPON programme and ethos of European territorial development and cohesion to the Nobelist Paul Krugman's new economic geography theory. In conclusion, Zaucha listed the failures and barriers of VASAB by arguing that the VASAB vision has only to limited extent influenced real territorial development processes (e.g. Rail Baltica, Kaliningrad, preservation of coastal landscapes). He also emphasised that there is still a profound lack of monitoring of BSR spatial development processes as well as a lack of co-operation with the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Ministers for Transport. Zaucha stressed that fleshing out and deepening the vision is an ongoing, dynamic process, keeping a balance between two functions of the 'visionary co-operation': strategic planning and project initiation/monitoring project results. The presentation ended with a long and lively *Questions and Answers* session and discussion on the concept of territorial cohesion and key priorities for policy harmonization.



Figure 4. Niels Boje Groth, Jacek Zaucha and Matti Fritsch debating territorial policies in the BSR and the meaning of new economic geography for ESPON findings on regional economies and growth.

Matti Fritsch (University of Eastern Finland) presented a paper on the inter-relationship between CEMAT and EU activities in spatial planning. Arguing that the link between the two spheres of co-operation is rather weak, and sometimes even takes on a competitive nature, Fritsch asked for closer integration between the two. Particularly ESPON could be instrumental in this as a provider of territorial evidence, a field that CEMAT is comparatively weak in due to the lack of resources. CEMAT, on the other hand, could provide an important forum or interface to link the EU territory with the surrounding neighbourhood, such as Russia which recently held the CEMAT chairmanship.

Daniel Rauhut (KTH, Sweden) in his keynote presentation discussed migration trends and its territorial impacts in the BSR. First, he stressed the data issues, specifically different registration rules. Data is unreliable as people move without registering the move, and there are different time lags for registration, etc. He continued with trends on migration. Net migration peaked in the early 1990s, but levelled in out in 2000. He stated that immigrants could be useful for the country of destination in particular if they settled down in the periphery and not in the metropolitan areas. The present migration trends point at an increasing territorial divergence – from declining rural areas in new member states to expanding urban areas in many Nordic countries DK, FI, NO and SE (and DE). Domestic migration trends are the same.

Sarolta Németh (University of Eastern Finland) gave an insight into the relevant work done in the ESPON applied research project TERCO (*European Territorial Cooperation as a Factor of Growth, Jobs and Quality of Life*). She focused on those special aspects of the Finnish-Russian border case study region carried out within this wider international research project which, due to the fact that it included territories outside the EU (the Republic of Karelia, Russia), are important to consider in terms of project design and analysis. The Finnish-Russian border is specific in the respect that it differs from typical EU border settings due to its location along an external EU-border with a non-candidate country and because it has a northern-peripheral situation and a sparse settlement pattern.

Virpi Kaisto (Lappeenranta University of Technology, Finland) presented ESPON ULYSSES project which is thematically cross-cutting. The project explores (1) Territorial socio-economic dynamics including patterns of cross-border polycentric

development, urban-rural relationship, accessibility and connectivity of the regions and effects of demographic change, and (2) Territorial performance dynamics picturing the performance of the cross-border areas in relation to the revised Lisbon Strategy and the Gothenburg Strategy.

Antti Vasanen (University of Turku, Finland), elaborated on “how polycentric is polycentric” based on evidence of functional polycentricity in Finnish urban regions. He examined polycentric development of the three largest urban regions and their functional roles in Finland between 1980 and 2007. A new method of spatial analysis is introduced where the level of functional polycentricity is measured using detailed commuting data.

Maija Usca (University of Latvia) focused in her presentation on suburban development patterns in Riga, specifically fragmentation and the search for common structures. The results of the research, which are based on cartographic analysis, territory surveys and semi-structured in-depth interviews with the suburb's residents, mark and clarify suburban development trends in Riga's suburbs, which bear similarities with many territories around other Baltic and Eastern European cities.

In a similar field of research, Martin Gauk (University of Tartu, Estonia) assessed the role of suburban residential development in launching sustainable planning policies in Estonia. This study examines the extent of suburbanization in the urban fringe of Tartu, the second largest city in Estonia, from the perspective of how urban sprawl contributes to residential and transportation energy use and related carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. According to his results, the locations of new residential settlements are chosen according to the availability of land, mainly occupying agricultural land as well as putting pressure on green belts and networks, resulting in widespread impacts on environmental sustainability.

Elina Apsite (University of Latvia) focussed on the destinations of Latvian migrants. After EU enlargement, Sweden did not receive as many Eastern European migrants as it was expected at the time. Recently, however, emigration to Sweden has increased significantly. Nordic countries as potential destinations were not the receivers of ‘pioneering’ migrants who are instrumental in establishing support network to attract newcomers. The statistics for 2010, however, show that the number of Baltic State

immigrants in Sweden has grown significantly since 2008. The economic recession and growing unemployment in Latvia from 2009 onwards resulted in even higher emigration levels as compared to those following Latvia's accession to the EU in 2004.

Martin Nouza (University of Iceland) presented his findings on the study of second home developments in Iceland. Due to specific demographic and geographic conditions, the majority of second homes in Iceland have been constructed in amenity-rich areas close to Reykjavík creating relatively large clusters with a high density of purpose-built recreational houses. As the literature suggests, it can be expected that almost 50 years of steady development in those areas has had a direct and long-lasting impact on the local economy as well as the host society.

The NGM 2011 ESPON sessions did not only focus on keynotes and young scholars' presentations. A lot of expert discussions and professional networking between the participants formed also an important part at the end of presentations and sessions. Some ESPON projects were directly linked to the sessions such as DEMIFER, TERCO and ULYSSES. Some other ESPON projects such as FOCl, EDORA, PURR, and ESPON CLIMATE were reflected upon and discussed in relation to the doctoral students' research in the field of territorial development. The majority of cases presented development trends in the BSR and in its respective countries. The young researchers exchanged their results and experiences in research methods and familiarised themselves with the ESPON evidence base, tools, indicators and data. As an important arena of debate, current territorial practices from BSR countries and regions were compared and discussed comprehensively. Territorial cohesion as a horizontal policy principle was incorporated discussion on how regional policy faces challenges from aspects such as demographic change, urbanisation and territorial co-operation.

In conclusion, the NGM 2011 ESPON sessions in Roskilde May 25–26, 2011 contributed to the capitalization and dissemination of ESPON evidence by examining different cases of PhD projects in the BSR. They also encouraged doctoral students to think in territorial cohesion terms, to communicate the ESPON results and to update their explorations in the framework of the Territorial Agenda and the EU Strategy for the BSR. The ESPON sessions helped to bridge the gap between the ESPON community and the younger generation of scholars active in regional studies.

WP 2d. Scientific seminar in Oslo in March 2012

NORBA reached out to national research communities by cooperating with the NS-RSA (Nordic Section of the European Regional Science Association), which represents several academic fields and is well-known both for strong inter-Nordic linkages and active efforts to include also non-Nordics in its activities. For promoting this co-operation, a joint scientific seminar was organized in Oslo in March 14–15, 2012. The seminar title was “*Nordic and Baltic Regions in a European Development and Policy Context*”. The seminar was hosted by the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) and the venue was the Norwegian Research Park, close to the University of Oslo, Blindern.

The increasing emphasis on transnational perspectives in territorial policy, planning and research, partly influenced by processes of Europeanization, provided the general background to the conference. The Nordic-Baltic regions are facing many similar challenges, however against the background of rather different framework conditions. Correspondingly, Baltic and Nordic regional and territorial research is faced with questions revolving around the fruitfulness and transferability of basic concepts, results and insights derived from different contexts and perspectives.

The seminar called for papers of direct or indirect relevance for the discussion of various aspects related to the issues stated above, i.e. by addressing questions related to some of the following broad topics (also partly tackled by keynote speakers):

- Prevailing territorial trends, perspectives and challenges in the Nordic-Baltic regions; confronting ESPON and national evidence.
- Structural impacts of the financial crises and its aftermath on Nordic-Baltic regions; ‘creative destruction’?
- The fruitfulness of EU and ESPON spatial research and policy concepts as applied to specific Nordic-Baltic regions and different territorial levels.
- Vulnerability and resilience of Nordic-Baltic regions to major global/external trends (economic, environmental, political); problems of measurement and relevance of ESPON results.

The seminar was open for Baltic, Nordic and international participants from universities, research institutions, government agencies, organisations, and others with an interest in regional

development in the Nordic and Baltic regions. Submitted abstracts for presentations were evaluated by a two-person committee representing both NORBA and NS-RSA.

Around 60 persons registered to participate at the seminar, including representatives from all the Baltic and Nordic countries as well as from other European countries. 35 presentations spanning over a wide range of topics were accepted. Most of the presentations are available at NIBRs website (<http://www.nibr.no/en/news/other-nibr-news/seminar-norba-rsa.aspx>), including the three plenary presentations (keynote speakers).

Programme

The seminar was organized into two plenary sessions and four parallel paper sessions running through the whole of the seminar outside the plenary sessions. The welcoming statements were given by Heikki Eskelinen (NORBA) and Lars Westin (NS-RSA). The first day plenary session contained a keynote speech and a panel discussion comprised of all NORBA partners (the ECPs of the Baltic and Nordic states except Denmark and Lithuania) on the topic "*Implications of ESPON in policy making and practice*". The second day plenary session contained two plenary speeches.

The moderator during the panel discussion on the first day was Steinar Johansen, Chairman of the NS-RSA. He challenged the NORBA-panel by stating several critical questions related to the orientation, themes, organization and management of the ESPON program and its separate projects, especially the relationship between the project and program management, the project frameworks and the central governing of the individual project. The questions triggered a vivid discussion among the panelists and also some contributions from the audience on how to enhance the positive implications of ESPON in policy making and practice.

The first-day plenary speaker was Kristin Nakken (Division Director, The Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development). The title of her speech was "*Norwegian Regional Policy; Challenges, Means, Transnational Perspectives, Nordic-Baltic Regional Policy Cooperation*". She presented the general background, regional structure and development trends and problems as well as the specific challenges underpinning Norwegian regional policies. She also gave an overview of the aims, general and specific focus, organization, central actors,

instruments and measures of both the broader and the more specific policies for regional development, including transnational perspectives and cooperation (including especially the North Sea Region, the Baltic Sea Region and the High North, reflecting geographical position as well as political priorities).



Figure 5. Chairman of the European Regional Science Association, Charlie Karlsson (Jönköping University, Sweden) raises a comment to the panelist at the scientific conference of NORBA, Oslo, 14 March 2012.

The first of the second-day plenary speakers was Emeritus Professor Cliff Hague (Heriot-Watt University, INTERSRAT, UK ECP). The title of his speech was “*ESPON, Europe 2020 and Austerity. What Research do we need for Territorial Development in Europe Today?*”. Leading the audience through the last twenty years of EU policy process towards the present-day main policy documents and orientations related to territorial cohesion policies, he showed how the financial crises changed the context in which territorial cohesion policy and the ESPON 2013 program had developed, referring to “*Europe 2020*” and the ESPON Synthesis Report “*New Evidence on Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Territories*”. Hague showed by way of examples and by pointing to several mechanisms how the crisis and the policy responses to it, particularly the austerity policy, have a territorial dimension, apparently entailing adverse regional effects and counteracting the aim of territorial cohesion. Finally, he confronted the general ESPON ‘mindset’ and the ESPON project portfolio with the knowledge requirements and pressing research questions that arise in the wake of the crises and counter-crisis policies in a territorial cohesion context.

The second of the second-day plenary speakers was Jan Mønnesland, Norwegian Economist, previously active in Norwegian, Nordic and European urban and regional research for several decades. The title of his speech was *“Impacts of the Financial Crisis on Regional Policy and Development”*. He provided a detailed account of the economic and political preconditions and responses to, and the later development of, the financial crises of 2008–2009, and its particular character and course of development in Europe and the Eurozone. He also elaborated on some probable effects and courses of development related to the implementation of new budget rules in accordance with the new Stability Pact scheduled to be implemented by January 2013 if ratified by enough Euro countries. Mønnesland pointed to different mechanisms that are of relevance for assessing effects and perspectives for regional policies and development, including the public as well as (different parts of) the private economic sector. He also reflected on the potential scope for regional policies at regional, national and European levels.

The four parallel paper sessions were each organized as three sub-sessions (workshops), all with different moderators appointed from the NORBA project team and the NS-RSA. Several presentations were based on ESPON projects and/or related to concepts that are important in the ESPON context, like territorial cohesion and polycentricity. In addition to the PURR project, with its parallel session, particularly the project SeGI was well represented.



Figure 6. Organizer of the NORBA’s scientific conference, the Norwegian ECP Olaf Foss, summarized the experiences and results at the final session on 15 March 2012.

Concluding remarks

Olaf Foss and Steinar Johansen, both representing the host institution, NIBR, summarized the results at the final session. The following excerpt is from the speech by Foss.

“The collaboration with NS-RSA has proved very smooth and constructive. The long term traditions and large and varied body of regional research in the Nordic and Baltic states is potentially an important source of knowledge and inspiration to European territorial research, while perspectives, concepts, themes and approaches in European territorial research – as represented by ESPON – may fertilize national and regional research and further a fruitful synergy, adding value to the quality of and capitalization from regional and territorial research in general. The plenary and session/workshop discussions at the seminar have proved promising in this context.”

WP 2e. Final Conference in Jūrmala in August 2012

The aim of the final conference in Jūrmala “Territorial Cohesion in Europe and in the BSR” was to present and discuss selected ESPON findings relevant to the Nordic-Baltic countries by focusing on territorial cooperation, demography, growth poles, climate change and particularly the application of ESPON findings in a Nordic-Baltic context. The conference provided a transnational discussion arena for policy makers, practitioners and researchers on current territorial development trends, challenges and opportunities in the region.

The NORBA final conference was organized in the historical resort city of Jūrmala (Latvia) on August 30–31, 2012 and was attended by 100 participants. The main topics were (1) territorial cohesion in the Baltic Sea Region, (2) ESPON findings on key regional challenges: demography, urban regions, rural areas, and (3) territorial governance.



Figure 7. NORBA's final conference

In his keynote speech, Professor Johan Bachtler (European Policies Research Centre, UK) analyzed the reform of EU cohesion policy. He emphasized that Cohesion Policy addresses two main challenges and criticisms: on one hand, those regarding its rationale and necessity, and on the other hand, those regarding its priorities, effectiveness and delivery. Currently, Cohesion Policy fails in two aspects: (1) contractual agreements between EU and member states are weak, and (2) communication on the policy results is largely lacking. What comes to the next period, it is probable that there will be a pronounced shift in support strategies from the poorest to transitional regions, thus decreasing the focus on Central Europe to regions throughout the entire European Union. In addition, the new Cohesion Policy will pay more attention to the role of cities and sustainable urban development, integration of development strategies, rationalization of administration and simplification of strategy-oriented approaches. In Bachtler's view, developers and administrators of the Cohesion Policy are not sufficiently informed about the work carried out by ESPON, available results are not fully used, and in general the role of ESPON would be more appreciated if it resulted in concrete policy recommendations.



Figure 8. John Bachtler (European Policies Research Centre, UK) provided insights into EU Cohesion policy reforms and proposals how territorial cohesion could be translated into EU policies.

Raivis Bremšmits, in his speech “*Trends and implications of territorial cohesion in Latvia*”, presented the main characteristics of regional development in Latvia, pointing also to the fact that Latvia has one of the highest regional disparities in the EU. This is due to the dominant role of the City of Riga and the municipalities surrounding it. Even if secondary cities have recently gained more importance in regional development, so far there has been too little investment in business-oriented activities. According to Bremšmits, the main challenges for the Cohesion Policy in Latvia are, firstly, the attraction of investments to the development centres, and secondly, the introduction of an intersectorally integrated approach (currently projects are divided by sectors). He also emphasized that for the next cohesion policy period, Latvia should aim to make municipalities more business-oriented through investments in business infrastructure, and to provide more support to development-oriented activities, and to concentrate resources in certain development centres.

Piera Petruzzi represented the ESPON CU at the conference. Her presentation “*ESPON 2002–2012: A decade of territorial evidence*” provided insights into the main events and achievements of ESPON. During the period 2002–2006, ESPON has functioned as a bridge between research and real life, providing valuable information for policy makers and researchers. For example, the studies of demographic tendencies in the EU made the population ageing visible, and provided a strong basis and source of

information for policymakers. One of the key issues in the current period is migration, which will have a strong impact on EU development. In the next period ESPON should focus on bridging the gap between policymakers and scientists, providing advice to policymakers at all levels.

Sverker Lindblad (ESPON MC member of Sweden), in his speech "*Territorial Cohesion from a Swedish Perspective*", described and analyzed the administrative and functional divisions of Sweden, taking into account the mismatch and correlations between functional and administrative areas. He pointed out that cross-border and multilevel governance in Sweden is much needed due to its geographical variation.

Katarzyna Wojnar of the Polish ECP, in her presentation "*Territorial Cohesion in the BSR. Evidence-based multi-level strategic planning in practice in Poland*" depicted the country's current regional development tendencies. She paid attention to the fact that upon its entrance in the EU, Poland did not have a country-wide vision for comprehensive regional development. Currently, however, the country is in search of a new territorial development paradigm. In this endeavour, one of the main challenges is a choice between a sectoral and an integrated place-based approach.

The new regional policy of Poland envisages development based on the competitive advantages of each region by concentrating efforts in certain development centres and multi-level management. In order to implement this idea, the concept of the 'Polish Hexagon' has been developed. It consists of six significant Polish urban centres and considers their connectivity to be of the highest regional priority, thus indicating a shift from the earlier corridor thinking (which approached Poland as a corridor between East and West) to the development centre model. In this way, Warsaw's growing international role can also be supported. At the same time, Poland starts to look over Central Europe, for cooperating increasingly with Scandinavia and the Baltic counties. In general, it is not necessary that every region is innovative, but every region can develop as a good imitator.



Figure 9. Garri Raagma (University of Tartu, Estonia) illustrates his results on the role of higher education in regional development

Garri Raagma presented the results from a study of the role of regional (non-metropolitan) higher educational institutions in local and regional development. According to his findings, research and development (R&D) does not always lead to a high innovation activity and development in the region for the reason that new ideas can only disperse if there are people willing to actually disperse them. In most cases, R&D investment in areas with less than one million inhabitants does not have much influence on economic development. Given this, one has to ask the question whether establishing higher educational institutions in small regions is a waste of resources or whether it can really function as a way to spread development.

Raagma presented data on how the Baltic States are actively developing regional higher education institutions. In Latvia and Estonia, numerous higher education institutions have been established since their higher education sector was liberalized. In Latvia, these were mostly profit-oriented, but in Estonia they are regional branches of larger universities according to the economical specialization of respective regions. Within this 'smart specialization' frame, students can be attracted even to the less developed regions as the preconditions for knowledge that leads to innovation and then growth are embedded into the territorial culture of each region. On this basis, Raagma recommended to develop strong networking of the higher education system and to follow specific regional knowledge barometers.

The members of the panel session were asked: which components of territorial capital can be more efficiently exploited, and be of a

higher added value for cooperation in the BSR? The answers covered a number of different views and insights.

Garri Raagmaa mentioned former Soviet military and industrial areas in transition: they present good development potentials and can help to revitalize rural areas as industries move out of high-cost cities. Katarzyna Wojnar considered that the fast growing metropolises in South-Eastern Europe create new, luring opportunities for metropolitan life and employment. On the other hand, Scandinavia has established prosperous R&D activities. In this setting, regional diversity includes a potential for exchanges. Sverker Lindblad argued that the best way to make the most out of territorial assets is to invest in people – such investments can generate new, unexpected qualities. Reinhard Reynisson, for his part, highlighted that many of the issues that have been discussed are of high importance for his home base, the sparsely populated North-East (rural) Iceland. According to him, the basis of development lies in investing in traditional, proven values and not copying from successful areas with a different development background. Alda Nikodemusa brought a Latvian perspective to this exchange of views. She stated that her country needed a change in the way of thinking, namely shifting from focusing on problems to managing its assets, because these certainly exist and are often overlooked. In her view, a typical example has been the development of Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences which reflects the high creativity potential in the country.

In the next round of this lively panel, creativity was the key topic. Wojnar emphasized that developing high quality environments in cities is usually connected to increased creativity, and even basic investment, not only R&D investments, can support development and thus lead towards this direction. Raagmaa raised the question whether the existing class of young, creative people will not be required anymore, and whether we will see a new exodus when they are forced to leave the Baltic countries.

Antti Roose turned the focus to the possible contribution of ESPON: How can ESPON calls become more visible and responsive to real, everyday local needs? Alda Nikodemusa emphasized the importance of this question, stating that it is very important to the future ESPON – municipalities, for instance, should see the need and benefits of ESPON. Raagmaa argued that first we should study basic ESPON documents and concepts in order to absorb the true meaning of those new ‘buzzwords’.

Sverker Lindblad added a practical point: knowledge obtained through ESPON needs to be condensed for those who have no time for reading through thousands of pages thoroughly. Consequently, knowledge brokers who present the information to policy makers are needed. Nikodemusa highlighted the fact that universities and even high schools can play an important role in this. Finally, Wojnar reminded the other panelists and the audience that ESPON contact points need to be strengthened because these are the best agents to spread the ESPON knowledge – they know how to channel it to the right places.

On the second day of the conference, the first keynote speaker was Phil Rees (University of Leeds, UK) who presented findings from the ESPON DEMIFER project (*Demographic and migratory flows affecting European regions and cities*). The presentation paid particular attention to the link between key demographic development/projections in the Nordic-Baltic countries and potential policy scenarios to influence longevity, fertility as well as migration. According to the DEMIFER findings, population projections for the Nordic countries are generally more optimistic as compared to the Baltic countries both in terms of population change in population ageing. The presented policy scenarios include demographically relevant policies related to the improvement of longevity, the encouragement to have more children and the management of both external and internal migration. Against the background of advancing population ageing in the Nordic-Baltic countries, pro-active health policies are identified as a key factor in maintaining and improving the health of the larger, older population.

The discussant of the paper, Daniel Rauhut, emphasized that population decline is a regionally differentiated issue. For instance, demographic forecasts for Latvia are inarguably very negative, but the Riga metropolitan region is very different in terms of demographic development. He also pointed out that since rural and peripheral areas face a gloomy future, immigrants are not expected to move to such depressed areas but will choose metropolitan regions instead – and this tends to make things even worse. On the other hand, should we also ask whether it is really that bad to have an ageing and declining population? The answer to this question has become a key challenge to Western civilizations. Phil Rees agreed that long-term strategies and solutions are needed. One of them is the extension of a retirement age, which cannot be seen as a taboo anymore, since Europeans

are able to work much longer than in the past due to technological and medical progress.

Next, Maciej Smetkowski (EUROREG, University of Warsaw, Poland) introduced key findings from the ESPON FOCI project (Future Orientation of Cities), focussing on Nordic and BSR metropolises from the European perspective. His analysis was based on the argument that the shift from the industrial to a knowledge based economy implies that metropolitan regions have significant competitive advantages over rural regions as they develop interregional linkages and urban networks. However, metropolises in the post-communist countries are more passive when it comes to globalisation processes and they are also characterized by pronounced peripherality, poorer contactability and weaker interregional cooperation. More recently, even if the economic crisis has had an impact on the development of European metropolitan regions, it has not changed or challenged the current patterns of metropolization. This impact can be measured by analyzing sectoral transformations (such as manufacturing, construction, market services) of post-socialist cities. Some cities have suffered to a greater extent than national economies (Riga, for instance), but in general metropolitan regions (e.g., Sofia) perform better.

The discussant Gatis Pāvils argued that it remains unclear whether peripheral metropolitan regions in Europe are bound to remain such, or whether a formula to overcome this can be applied. His example was Helsinki, which he saw as a successful case in the European periphery. Smetkowski agreed with the view that Nordic countries are successfully overcoming peripherality, but it remains open whether the importance of polycentric networks has been overestimated in increasing the accessibility of distant hinterlands with respect to a polycentric structure within each country and in terms of investment in regional higher education institutions.

The next speaker, Petri Kahila of Nordregio analyzed the findings of the ESPON EDORA project. His main conclusion was that even remote rural regions can exhibit endogenous economic dynamics, being far more complex and rich than initially thought, and that programmes for specific territories and functional areas need to be better defined.

The discussant of his paper, Hild-Marte Bjørnsen was highly critical about the methods and results of EDORA. In particular, she

saw that the maps are misleading and may lead to wrong assumptions, and that the EDORA typology does not reflect the rural realities. She mentioned that a research project often sets imaginary problems, and finds imaginary solutions to them, for instance by changing the definitions or changing the borders of regions. She also stated that different instruments are needed for different regions and that there is an overall lack of clear policy objectives. Kahila defended the EDORA approach, and argued that even if the maps may not be fully accurate, they can definitely reveal problematic areas and form a basis for research.

In the last session on Governance, Lisa van Well introduced the preliminary results of ESPON TANGO project, also from the perspective of the Baltic Sea Region. This ESPON study defined the scope of the territorial governance concept and used climate change as an exemplary process in order to examine good practices in the field of territorial governance. She argued that climate change can be seen as a true territorial governance issue, as in most cases there are no state institutions taking charge of this challenge.

The discussant Grétar Þór Eypórsson raised the question of who the end-user of the results of this project are. In addition, he saw that the difference between planning and governance concepts is still unclear. Lisa van Well agreed that the question on end users is of key importance. The project's aim is to find the stakeholders through a wide involvement of specialists and practitioners.

The last speaker, Sarolta Németh (University of Eastern Finland) presented some of the results of the ESPON TERCO project which has investigated the role and importance of territorial cooperation, that is, city-twinning, and cross-border, interregional, macro-regional, and transcontinental cooperation. The findings reveal that the Baltic Sea Region is very active in twinning city agreements and transnational cooperation. A case study on Finnish-Russian cross-border cooperation is an example of low intensity cooperation and asymmetric attitudes of the parties involved. As a conclusion Sarolta Németh stated that there definitely is a need to react to the increasing international role and activity of Russia, in order to support it as an equal cooperation partner. The discussant Daniel Galland asked whether the case of cooperation between Finland and Russia could be compared to cooperation on EU internal borders and how territorial governance could contribute to territorial cooperation. In her answer, Németh emphasized that the

Finnish-Russian border has been closed and strictly controlled for a very long time. The almost complete lack of international interactions in the past has its repercussions on current cooperation, but the ways for cooperation are actively sought in spite of different experiences and incompatibility of territorial governance.

Olaf Foss, in his closing speech “*Beyond NORBA, Conclusions, Closing remarks*”, summarized the history of the NORBA project. The main conclusion was that it is worth continuing dialogue and cooperation. As a natural consequence, the ESPON ENECON (*ESPON Evidence in a North European Context*) was therefore launched in February 2012. ENECON shall address the challenges and opportunities of territorial development and spatial planning policies and practices, in particular in the very northern part of Europe. By actively facilitating the use and capitalization of ESPON evidence, the overall aim is to contribute to the transnational approach on territorial analysis, policies and planning in a macro-regional context and perspective.

WP2f. Blunder checks

NORBA conducted 14 blunder checks, which are listed in Annexe 1. The division of labour with the ENECON project in this activity was agreed according to the guidelines received from the CU.

WP2g. Final report.

As the NORBA Lead Partner, the Finnish ECP was mainly responsible for the compilation of the project’s final report based on the contributions by the project partners. This work package, especially the key lessons learnt and reported in the report, was discussed in connection to NORBA’s main events and at its project meetings. This debate, a process of critical self-reflection on the work and achievements of NORBA, will be finalized at the project’s last meeting in December 2012.

Collaboration between TNA projects

NORBA benefited from links to other TNA projects as the representatives of the Estonian ECP participated in the

ESPONTrain project whereas the Latvian ECP representative participated in ESPON CADEC.

In addition, cooperation between NORBA and the ESPON INTERSTRAT project proved particularly fruitful. Cliff Hague, Emeritus Professor, Herriot-Watt University (UK ECP and Director of the INTERSRAT project), was invited for a plenary speech at the NORBA conference in Oslo, 14-15 March 2012. Matti Fritsch (representing ECP Finland) participated in the INTERSTRAT meeting and conference “Positioning Urban Scotland in its European Context” in Edinburgh, 29-30 April 2012 as the invited representative of NORBA. His participation provided the INTERSTRAT meeting with Nordic perspectives on urban development, perspectives that were highly relevant and interesting for the Scottish and international participants. At the Final Conference of NORBA in Riga, 30-31 August 2012, Katarzyna Wojnar of the Polish ECP (EUROREG, University of Warsaw) gave an invited speech at the panel session on ESPON capitalisation and policy response.

4 Lessons and Conclusions

The underpinnings of NORBA included an explicit division of labour between the national ECP activities and their transnational networking activities as part of NORBA. Within the constraints of available resources, each ECP in the NORBA countries is implementing its own dissemination and capitalisation strategy adapted to country-specific circumstances: in promoting the programme, presenting its findings as well as through purpose-built projects that attempt to link ESPON results and data with planning and policy-making practices.² Against this background, the NORBA project has focused its activities on promoting a transnational (or macro-regional) dialogue concerning the interface between research and policy-making among various stakeholders

² In Finland, for instance, national ECP activities during the ESPON 2006 and 2013 programmes have included the events organized in co-operation with the Ministry of Employment and the Economy and the Ministry of the Environment, publishing activities (eight Finnish-language reports in 2004-2012, including articles by researchers or experts discussing and evaluating ESPON results) and focused projects such as *Spatial North* as part of the *Northern Periphery Programme*.

(primarily policy-makers, researchers and planners at various spatial levels).

This transnational approach created the forums within which actors in Baltic countries (formerly part of the Soviet Union) could learn from the long-established Nordic co-operation and comparatively well-established planning systems. On the other hand, the Baltic States have started from a relatively clean sheet and can be the source of many innovative ideas, but also reveal current challenges in territorial development policy. Key topics in these debates included the drawing up of national development plans in the Baltic States or unregulated development around main urban centres in these countries. Secondly, macro-regional labour market and demographic trends, that is, BSR-wide labour commuting, skilled labour drain from the Baltic States and its consequences were discussed in NORBA meetings and conferences. Overall, transnational stakeholder dialogues – utilizing ESPON findings – helped to unpack the territorial development issues around the Baltic Sea, including the import role of the external border of the EU for peripheral border regions, EU-Russian territorial development contexts, poor accessibility in the Baltic states and energy networks that are not connected to ‘mainland EU’.

The experiences from these NORBA dialogues also support the view that much could be achieved by closer integration between the ESPON work and ‘family’ and established collaborative forums such as VASAB or CEMAT, which actually have a strong participation of practitioners and policy makers. A certain amount of integration is of course already provided by a, to some extent, shared epistemic community, but more institutionalized co-operation would be a valuable tool for bringing ESPON findings into the ‘policy world’. On a self-critical note, it could be argued that NORBA could also have done more in this respect – at least it has given an impetus to the future activity of ENECON (ESPO Evidence in a North European Context) in this respect.

In the early stages of NORBA, the potential uses of ESPON concepts, findings and data were analyzed by surveying whether ESPON material has found its way into the main national-level planning documents. The study by Niels Boje Groth provides interesting insights into the content and evolution of national spatial planning documents in the Nordic and Baltic countries (see Box 1). As such, this exercise contributed to and documented

NORBA's aim to facilitate a dialogue on methods, concepts and data needs in this macro-region.

Despite the fact that the Nordic-Baltic national planning practices and approaches remain diverse, some common features are visible in the national planning documents produced since the mid-1990s. This includes a shift away from plans, characterised by strictly defined goals regarding the future of urban systems, towards perspectives or visions that are to be realized by (soft) means based on potentials that are inherent and specific to a given region or city and are more openly defined and designed to mobilise and include stakeholders. These visions and perspectives have also seen an influx of 'European' planning concepts such as polycentricity, development zones or cross-border cooperation. However, despite the above-mentioned proliferation of ESDP/ESPON concepts, the utilization of ESPON data, findings and results, particularly in terms of the 'spatial positioning' of national and regional territories, remains at a rudimentary level in the national planning documents and should be strengthened in the future.

NORBA's chosen approach to alleviate these shortcomings, i.e. the organization of meetings and conferences in order to bring researchers and policy-makers together around current themes and projects of ESPON, particularly those with a high relevance to the Nordic-Baltic region, has proven to be of value. NORBA has succeeded in engaging a variety of academic disciplines in the ESPON debate, a target that should also be considered at the European, transnational level. Processes towards a generational shift have also been initiated. The events organized have attracted a significant number of young fellows from various higher education institutions that will result in a new generation of policy makers, experts and researchers from various backgrounds. They will complement the ESPON 'old guard' that continues actively to contribute to the progress of European territorial research.

Generally, experiences from the conferences has shown that the general interest in ESPON's research on European territorial development is high, not only among the individuals attending the conferences, but also among the partner institutions that helped to organize and contributed to the conferences, such as Nordregio and the NS-RSA. The added value gained from NORBA's work and its contribution to a macro-regional approach particularly proved to be the provision of a forum for the zooming-in into the

vast repository of knowledge and information that is ESPON. The conferences, attended by altogether approximately 250 people, made it possible to filter and selectively discuss ESPON evidence and typologies in-depth according to their relevance for the Nordic-Baltic region. This was facilitated by the posing of questions such as “what can ESPON do for your region” or “what relevance has ESPON for the development in various regions”. Only by making a conscious assessment of what is relevant and what is not, and by making ESPON results accessible or ‘readable’ for practitioners and policy-makers, will ESPON knowledge become an ingredient of regional and national planning processes.

In this context, the targeted matching of national statutory planning system with EU strategy- and evidence-making raises a number of institutional and legal contradictions as regarding the debate on territorial governance. The integration of ESPON results and findings into national and regional planning processes would enable local, regional and national actors to gain an understanding of macro-level or ‘external’ developments for a better comprehension of their ‘internal’ development, which, in turn, would prevent a situation where they work in a vacuum or in isolation. The above mentioned practice of ‘spatial positioning’ is closely related to these aspects. Experience has also shown that bottom-up and ‘uploading’ processes, i.e. the feeding of national and sub-national interests, concerns, approaches, etc. into the European debate and territorial research activities, attracts significant attention. The strong interest in Priority 2 ‘Targeted Analyses’ projects, which also became evident in all NORBA events, is a clear evidence of national and sub-national actors’ desire to influence ESPON activities.

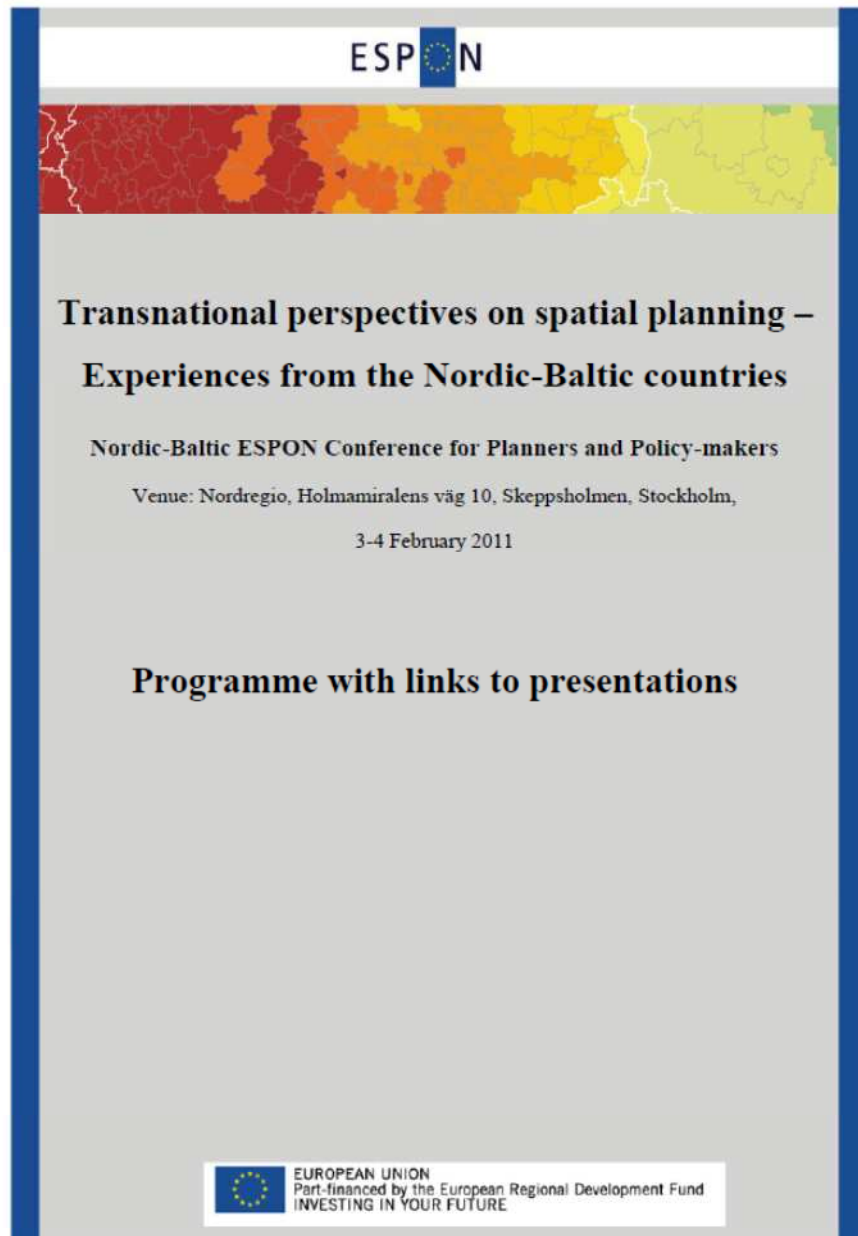
The NORBA experience has also shown that the role of the ECPs is of increasing importance in providing an interface between the ESPON ‘superstructure’ and national as well as sub-national actors. The ECPs have sound experience in filtering ESPON results for national consumption as well as critically evaluating the results from national perspectives.

C Annexes

Annex 1. Blunder checks

Acronym	Project name	Date
ReRisk2010	Regions at Risk of Energy Poverty	28.4.2010
DEMIFER	Demographic and Migratory Flows Affecting European Regions and Cities	4.6.2010
EDORA	European Development Opportunities in Rural Areas	4.6.2010
FOCI	Future Orientation for Cities	4.6.2010
CLIMATE	Climate Change and Territorial Effects on Regions and Local Economies in Europe	23.3.2011
ARTS	Assessment of Regional and Territorial Sensitivity	4.4.2011
ATTREG	Attractiveness of European Regions and Cities for Residents and Visitors	2.3.2012
KIT	Knowledge, Innovation, Territory	29.3.2012
SGPTD	Secondary growth poles in territorial development	29.3.2012
TIGER	Territorial Impact of Globalization for Europe and its Regions	29.3.2012
TERCO	European Territorial Cooperation as a Factor of Growth, Jobs and Quality of Life	10.4.2012
GEOSPECS	Geographic Specificities and Development Potentials in Europe	10.5.2012
EU LUPA	European Patterns of Land Use	21.6.2012
ESaTDOR	European Seas and Territorial Development, Opportunities and Risks	27.9.2012

Annex 2. NORBA conference programmes



Day I, Thursday 3 February: ESPON findings and their relevance for the BSR

Chair: Heikki Eskelinen (University of Eastern Finland/NORBA)

Questions and discussions after every speech

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 11.30-12.30: | Sandwich lunch |
| 12.30-12.45: | Words of Welcome
Mats Johansson (KTH/NORBA)
Ole Damsgaard (Nordregio) |
| 12.45-13.20: | ESPON 2013 on the road
Peter Billing (ESPON CU) |
| 13.20-14.00: | The 5th Cohesion Report
Jean Peyrony (DG Regio) |
| 14.00-14.40: | Spatial scenarios for Europe and Nordic-Baltic Countries
Alexandre Dubois (Nordregio) |
| 14.40-15.00: | Coffee break |
| 15.00-15.40: | Lessons from the Territorial Diversity-project (TeDi)
Grétar Thór Eythórsson (University of Akureyri/NORBA) |
| 15.40-16.20: | Future migratory movements – concentration or de-concentration?
Johanna Roto (Nordregio, ESPON DEMIFER) |
| 16.20-16.30: | Stretching the legs |
| 16.30-17.10: | A new rural typology for Europe and Intermediate regions
Andrew Copus (UHL, UK/Nordregio, Sweden, ESPON EDDRA) |
| 17.10-18.10: | “What can ESPON do for your region?”
Panel discussion based on the earlier presentations
<i>Chair: Lisa Van Well (Nordregio)</i>
<i>Participants:</i>
Peter Billing (ESPON CU)
Jean Peyrony (DG Regio)
Andrew Copus (UHL, Nordregio)
Ole Damsgaard (Nordregio)
Odd Godal (Norwegian MC)
Sverker Lindblad (Swedish MC) |
| 18.10 | End of Day I |

Day2, Friday 4 February: International aspects in national and regional planning

Chair: Folke Snickars (KTH, Sweden)

Questions and discussions after every speech

- 08.30-09.20: [Outlooks towards Europe in national planning of the Northern and Baltic countries - an overview](#)
Niels Boje Groth (KVL, Denmark)
- 09.20-09.55: [The need for interplay between international and national planning perspectives - reflections from a local perspective](#)
Carl-Johan Engström (KTH, Division of Urban and Regional Studies, Stockholm, Sweden)
- 09.55-10.30: [Finnish planning meets Europe](#)
Timo Turunen (Ministry of the Environment, Finland)
- 10.30-10.50: Coffee break
- 10.50-11.50: *The development of regional planning in the Baltic States***
- 10.50-11.10: [Development of the Regional planning concept for the next programming period](#)
Inguna Urtane (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Latvia)
- 11.10-11.30: [Linking the Estonian national spatial plan Estonia 2030+ with the European and Baltic spatial strategies](#)
Tavo Kikas (Estonian Ministry of Internal Affairs, Estonia)
- 11.30-11.50: [The development of regional planning in the Lithuania](#)
Marija Burinskiene (Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Lithuania)
- 11.50-12.00: Stretching the legs
- 12.00-13.10: **The need for international aspects in regional planning and policies**
Closing panel discussion
Chair: Folke Snickars (KTH, Sweden)
Participants:
Heikki Eskelinen (University of Eastern Finland/NORBA)
Niels Boje Groth (KVL, Denmark)
Tavo Kikas (Estonian Ministry of Internal Affairs, Estonia)
Inguna Urtane (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Latvia)
Christer Bengs (SLU, Sweden)
- 13.10: **Closing the conference**
- 13.15: Sandwich lunch

A2

ESPON: ZOOMING IN ON EUROPEAN SPATIAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION I

Territorial policies and forecasting
Chair: Niels Boje Groth

Room 2; Building 02

Implementation of territorial policies at the Baltic Sea Region level
J. Zaucha

Competition or Complementarities? – the Inter-relationship between CEMAT and EU Activities in Spatial Development Policy
M. Fritsch

Researching European Territorial Cooperation: Nordic Specificities
S. Németh

Addressing cross-border spatial development planning at the EU-Russian border area - First impressions and experiences of ULYSSES project's EUREGIO KARELIA case study
V. Kaisto

B2

ESPON: ZOOMING IN ON EUROPEAN SPATIAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION II

Trends in city-regions
Chair: Antti Rose

Room 2; Building 02

How polycentric is polycentric? Evidence of functional polycentricity in Finnish urban regions
A. Vasanen

Suburban patterns of Riga: fragmentation and the search for common structures
M. Usca & A. Puzulis

Assessment of Suburban Residential Development and the Advent of Sustainable Planning Policies in Estonia
M. Gauk

Addressing cross-border spatial development planning at the EU-Russian border area - First impressions and experiences of ULYSSES project's EUREGIO KARELIA case study
V. Kaisto

C2

ESPON: ZOOMING IN ON EUROPEAN SPATIAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION III

Mobility
Chair: Antti Rose

Room 2; Building 02

Migration trends and its territorial impacts in BSR
D. Rauhut

Nordic countries: new emigration destinations for Latvian migrants
E. Apsite

Second homes in Iceland: Impacts and perceptions in host communities
M. Nouza

Addressing cross-border spatial development planning at the EU-Russian border area - First impressions and experiences of ULYSSES project's EUREGIO KARELIA case study
V. Kaisto

ESPON student session at Nordic Geographers Meeting 2011

Preliminary Programme

Nordic and Baltic Regions in a European Development and Policy Context

March 14-15 2012, Oslo, Norway

Invitation to participate

On behalf of Regional Science Association Nordic and ESPON NorBa, Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) is delighted to invite you to participate at a two-day conference in Oslo on March 14-15 2012. Please find attached the preliminary programme for the conference.

Important information:

Call for papers: The deadline is expired and there is only very limited space for late entries.

Registration: Please register by March 4th, to Frida.tommerdal@nibr.no.

Contact persons: Olaf Foss (olaf.foss@nibr.no) and Steinar Johansen (steinar@nibr.no)

This is a low budget conference, which implies that the organisers will not prepare common meals except lunches and coffee. We will, on the other hand, not have a conference fee, and lunches and coffee breaks will be free of charge for the participants.

Accommodation: The participants are asked to make their own hotel arrangements. However, NIBR has agreements with selected hotels in Oslo, which you may contact through e-mail or telephone. Surprisingly, hotel nights are not too expensive in Oslo, at least compared to many other capital cities, and you might find quite reasonable accommodation in the city centre.

1. "Best Western Karl Johan" (<http://www.karljohan.no/>). Book online or by email to: bookingsjef@karljohan.no. Refer to agreement with NIBR ("Avtale med NIBR").
2. "Thon Hotels" http://www.thonhotels.no/booking/priskalender/?s_ref=ie2932M0S&kw=thon%20hotel&creative=9651685509&gclid=CMHY_ofV7a0CFdAvmAodAiBM4w with many hotels in central Oslo. Book online or by email to: meeting@thonhotels.no. Refer to agreement with STATEN ("Avtale med STATEN via NIBR").

Conference Venue: The seminar will be held at Forskningsparken. Please, take the westbound subway line 3, 4 or 5 from any T-marked station in the city centre to *Forskningsparken Station* and walk towards Forskningsparken. We do not recommend you to go by taxi, due to the Oslo Toll Ring (which forces the taxis to take a detour). The seminar will be at the *ground floor* (actually called level 2, one level down from the entrance).

Programme structure

Wednesday, March 14				
11.30	Registration and Sandwich Lunch			Auditorium and Restaurant Area
12.30	Words of Welcome from NORBA and RSA Nordic.	Heikki Eskilinen, NORBA and Lars Westin, RSA Nordic		Auditorium
13.00	Norwegian Regional Policy; Challenges, Means, Transnational Perspectives. Nordic-Baltic Regional Policy Cooperation	Kristin Nakken, Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development		Auditorium
13.45	NORBA Panel Discussion: Implications of ESPON in policy making and practice	Presenter: Participants in the NORBA project		Auditorium
14.30	Coffee Break			Auditorium Area
15.00	Parallel 1	Parallel 2	Parallel 3	Parallel 4
17.00	Finished for the Day			
Thursday, March 15				
09.00	ESPON, Europe 2020 and Austerity. What Research do We need for Territorial Development in Europe Today?	Cliff Hague, Emeritus Professor, Heriot-Watt University, UK Contact Point for ESPON 2013		Auditorium
09.45	Impacts of the Financial Crisis on Regional Policy and Development	Jan Mønnesland, Economist		Auditorium
10.30	Coffee Break			Auditorium Area
10.45	Parallel 1	Parallel 2	Parallel 3	Parallel 4
12.45	Sandwich Lunch			Restaurant Area
13.30	Parallel 1	Parallel 2	Parallel 3	Parallel 4
15.30	Short Break, With Coffee			Auditorium Area
15.45	Summing up and Farewell	Olaf Foss, NORBA and Steinar Johansen, RSA		Auditorium Area
16.00	The Seminar Finishes			

Parallels

Parallel 1: Planning and Development Issues, Nordic Baltic Regional Development

Noorkiiv: The differences in the levels of development of local governments in Estonia and related administrative challenges.

Raagma: The higher educational institutions and regional specialisation

Kalisto: The use of ESPON data and analyses in the study of cross-border regions. Experiences from ULYSSES project

Roose and Gauk: Territorial performance and urbanisation implications of Tartu as Southern Estonian regional pole

Kesipalk: Estonia 2010 and 2030+: Conceptual Change in State Level Spatial Planning

Németh: Territorial Cooperation in Europe: Specificities in a Nordic and external border context

Zimin: Regional Development and International Territorial Cooperation (ITC): The Case of Russian Karelia

Melchior: European Integration and Domestic Regions

Janusis and Pukis: New Development Policy – Territorial Based Approach Proposal

Skinkis a.o.: Public and Private in Space: Values, Legal Practice and Land-Use Planning in Latvia

Rile: Urban-Rural Interdependencies in Multi-Level Spatial Policies: View from Latvia

Vitola and Senfelde: Cross-Sectoral and Multi-Level Policy Coordination in Latvia

Mariussen: A shining path – or just blowing away? Norwegian solar industry regions in times of crisis

Parallel 2: Networks, Innovations and Infrastructure

Sörensson: Are MAR, Jacobs and Porter externalities less important for multi-plant than single-plant firms? (Wed.)

Aldes-Partanen: Creative destruction. Reinvigorating rural and sparsely populated areas.

Westeren: Regional development and knowledge, technology and competitiveness. (Thur)

Cornett: Cluster based regional development strategies – theoretical concepts and regional implementation – the case of the Baltic Sea Region

Mukkala and Tervo: Regional airports and regional growth: Which way does the causality run?

McArthur, Thorsen and Ubbø: Transport Networks and Accessibility: Complex Spatial Interactions.

Osland and McArthur: The Suitability of Hedonic Models for Cost-Benefit Analysis: Evidence from Commuting Flows

Stokka: A SCGE Modelling Approach Assessing Regional Effects of Energy Policy

Lautanen: Regional Dimensions of Finnish Growth Companies

Karlsson: Knowledge Spillovers – A Meta Analysis

Eglitis: University, Local Government and Entrepreneur Cooperation in the Regional Economic Development

Parallel 3: Cohesion, Welfare and Demographics

Eskeinen and Fritsch: Territorial cohesion and place based policy – are these concepts known and used in Finnish policy debates?

Rauhut and Ludlow: Services of General Interest and Territorial Cohesion: What, How and by Whom?

Humer and Rauhut: Towards a welfare typology for the ESPON Space

Johansson and Rauhut: Young Women on the Run? A Snapshot from Rural Sweden

Karlsson: Interregional Migration, Transport Improvements, and Gender

McArthur, Thorsen and Ubbø: Employment, Transport Infrastructure and Rural Depopulation.

Eythorsson: Labour Mobility and Responses to Local and Global Economic Crisis. The cases of two rural communities at the times of an economic collapse in Iceland

Komornicki and Swiatek: Accessibility and Services of General Interest: Preliminary Findings from some Case Studies.

Westin: Dynamics of Population Densities in Northern Scandinavia. Are there Policy Lessons for Northern Sweden in Northern Norway?

Hazners: Regional Disparities and their Relation to the Extent of Polycentricity or Monocentricity

Zobena and Benga: Social Cohesion in Rural Areas: Service Provision, Commuting and Mobility

Parallel 4: PURR Project Parallel

There will be eight presentations:

Presentations of the project (2 presentations): By the Regional Stakeholders and the Trans National Project Group (TPG).

Presentations of the case study regions (5 presentations): Notodden (NO), Videme (LV), Dumfries and Galloway (UK), North Yorkshire (UK) and Cambrian Mountains (UK).

Concluding remarks (1 presentation) from the TPG, followed by discussion between the participants.

Conference proceedings will be published. Those of the Authors who would like to have their paper evaluated for publication are kindly asked to email it to the organisers by March 4th.

NORBA

Nordic-Baltic Dialogues on Transnational Perspectives in Spatial Planning

ESPO N / NORBA final conference

„Territorial cohesion in Europe and in the BSR“

August 30-31, 2012

Baltic Beach Hotel, Jūrmala, Latvia

BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

Territorial cohesion has become a core policy-making agenda in governance and strategic planning practice in the EU, and thus also in Nordic and Baltic countries. The ESPON programme has examined and evaluated this multi-faceted concept and the challenges facing its feasibility and promotion. This ESPON NORBA conference in Jūrmala (Latvia) builds upon this evidence basis, contributing to capitalisation of ESPON territorial findings in a macro-regional context. The conference provides a transnational arena and forum for policy-makers and researchers to discuss and reflect on current territorial development trends, opportunities and insights recognized in different regions and various contexts. Main sessions and topics of the conference are:

- Territorial cohesion in the Baltic Sea Region
- ESPON findings on key regional challenges – demography, urban regions, rural areas
- Territorial governance

The NORBA project is one of the Transnational Networking Activities in the framework of ESPON 2013 Programme (www.espon.eu). Project partners from Finland, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Norway and Sweden utilize ESPON results and evidence in transnational dialogue on territorial cohesion and spatial planning. The conference in Jūrmala is the fourth and the final NORBA project event (see <http://www.rha.is/norba>). The NORBA project members are pleased to invite policy-makers and researchers from Nordic and Baltic countries to this conference, which will take place in the historical seaside resort of Jūrmala on August 30–31, 2012.

REGISTRATION AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Conference participation – free. Registration deadline July 30, 2012, registration link <http://ejuz.lv/k231f>

Practical Information is available and updated at <http://www.rha.is/norba/forsida/>

Location: Latvia, Jūrmala, Baltic Beach Hotel, 23/25 Jūras Street – 25 km from Riga, 15 km from Riga

Airport RIX (taxi 10–15 LVL, €13–18).

Hotel reservation: booking@balticbeach.lv or by calling +371 67771490, code NORB, prices 42–85 LVL (€60–121), deadline July 30, 2012.

CONTACT DETAILS

Programme

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Programme Draft

Ver August 16, 2012

Thursday, August 30, 2012

10:00 – 12:30 Registration, Check-in

11:30 – 12:30 Lunch, Coffee and Tea

12:30 – 14:15 Opening plenary session

Chair: *Heikki Eskelinen*

Solvita Zvidrina Welcome by the Director of the State Regional Development Agency of Latvia

John Bachtler (European Policies Research Centre, Glasgow, UK)

Raivis Bremšmits (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Latvia), Trends and implications of territorial cohesion in Latvia

Piera Petruzzi (ESPON CU), A Decade of territorial evidence

Discussion

14:15 – 14:45 Coffee and Tea

14:45 – 16:15 Policy dialogue session: Territorial cohesion in BSR

Chair: *Grétar Þór Eypórsson*

Sverker Lindblad (Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications, Sweden), Territorial Cohesion from the Swedish perspective

Katarzyna Wojnar (EUROREG, ESPON ECP, Poland), Evidence-based multi-level strategic planning in practice

Garri Raagmaa (University of Tartu, Estonia), The Baltic higher educational institutions for territorial cohesion

16:30-17:30 Panel session on ESPON capitalisation and policy response

Chair: *Antti Roose*

Panelists: plenary speakers and representatives of national/regional policymakers

Sverker Lindblad (SE), *Garri Raagmaa* (EE), *Katarzyna Wojnar* (PL), *Alda Nikodemusa* (LV), *Odd Godal* (NO), *Reinhard Reynisson* (IS) etc.

18.30 Guided tour in Jūrmala

20:00 Conference dinner

Friday, August 31, 2012

9:00 – 11:00 Evidence session: key regional challenges

Chair: *Mats Johansson*

Demography

Phil Rees (Univ. of Leeds, UK)

Discussant: *Daniel Rauhut*

Urban regions

Maciej Smetkowski (EUROREG, PL)

Discussant: *Gatis Pāvils*

Rural development

Petri Kahila (Nordregio, SE)

Discussant: *Hild-Marte Bjørnsen*

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee and Tea

11:30 – 13:00 Governance session: Nordic-Baltic practices and experiences

Chair: *Zane Lešinska*

Governance

Lisa Van Well (Nordregio, SE)

Discussant: *Grétar Þór Eypórsson*

Territorial cooperation

Sarolta Nemeth (UEF, FI)

Discussant: *Daniel Galland*

Conclusions, closing remarks

Beyond NORBA

Olaf Foss (NIBR, NO)

13:00 - Lunch and departure



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The ESPON 2013 Programme is part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. It shall support policy development in relation to the aim of territorial cohesion and a harmonious development of the European territory.