



**Invite you to a major gathering of practitioners and
international researchers**

**SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT OF
EUROPE'S NORTH WESTERN
PERIPHERY**

**The implications of ESPON findings for
territories beyond the London-Paris-Milan-
Munich-Hamburg ‘Pentagon’**

22-23 February 2005

Queen's University, Belfast

Organised by the ESPON Contact Points of the UK, Ireland, Belgium,
Netherlands, Hungary and the Czech Republic

Supported by:

School of Environmental Planning, Queen's University Belfast.

Department for Regional Development, Northern Ireland.

Department of the Environment, Housing and Local Government,
Ireland.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, UK.



The Strategic Planning Action Network (SPAN) is a transnational and
interdisciplinary research project funded under INTERREG III B

The European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON) is
researching key territorial trends and impacts across the whole of the EU.

Programme

Tuesday 22 February 2005

11.00 Registration / Coffee

Chair- John Martin (Department of the Environment, Housing and Local Government, Ireland and Ireland's representative on the ESPON Monitoring Committee)

11.30 Welcome -Dr. Ken Sterrett, (Head of Queens University Belfast School of Environmental Planning)

11.40 What is ESPON? – Professor Cliff Hague (Heriot-Watt University, UK ESPON Contact Point)

12.00 The SPAN INTERREG project – Dr.Michael Murray (Queens University Belfast)

12.15 Cohesion and Spatial Development of Rural and Peripheral Areas – findings and issues – Discussion led by Professor Jim Walsh (National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis, Maynooth) based on his Position Paper for the conference

13.00 Lunch

Chair – Dr.Brendan Murtagh (Queens University Belfast)

14.00 Can polycentric development enhance competitiveness and cohesion? Professor Simin Davoudi (Leeds Metropolitan University)

15.00 Infrastructure, accessibility and peripherality – Prof. Roger Vickerman (University of Kent)

16.00 Tea

16.30 Rural development and the natural environment - Dr.Mark Scott (University College Dublin).

17.30 International perspectives on peripherality: Pieter Bloemen (Netherlands ECP); Elizabeth Vajdovich –Visy (Hungary ECP); and Sarah Luyten (Belgium ECP).

18.00 Drinks reception.

Wednesday 23 February 2005

Chair – Mike Thompson, Department for Regional Development, Northern Ireland.

09.00 The Northern Ireland regional development strategy -Jim Hetherington (Regional Planning & Transportation Division, Department for Regional Development)

09.30 Ireland's National Spatial Strategy – Niall Cussen (Department of the Environment, Housing and Local Government)

10.00 Scotland's National Planning Framework – Dr.Graeme Purves (Scottish Executive)

11.00 Wales Spatial Plan – Grant Duncan (Strategic Policy Unit, Welsh Assembly)

11.30 The Northern Way – Speaker to be confirmed

12.00 Towards new collaborations – practice & research and transnational networking
Contributions from Pierre Cornut (Belgian ECP), Lubor Fridrich (Czech ECP).

12.45 Conference closes

13.00 Lunch.

What topics will be covered?

- What is the current position of regions outside the main urban core of the EU?
- What can we learn from the latest European research on such regions?
- How can peripheral regions enhance their accessibility and connections to European networks?
- Is the natural environment under threat and how can rural development create greater cohesion within and between regions?
- Can co-operation between urban areas create critical mass to strengthen competitiveness and growth? What are the implications for rural hinterlands?
- How are these issues being addressed in spatial planning initiatives in Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and the North of England?
- What views do researchers and practitioners from the Netherlands, Belgium, Hungary and the Czech Republic have about what is happening in Ireland and the UK?

This special meeting provides an exceptional opportunity for those involved in spatial development whether as practitioners or researchers to meet and share ideas. The focus is on the issues of rural areas and urban networks on the periphery of Europe. Findings from new research will be presented, with plenty of opportunity for commentary and debate from an audience that will include experts from a variety of backgrounds. It will be of interest to policy makers and researchers involved in sustainable economic development, regional competitiveness, and the changing geography of Europe.

What you need to know

The conference will take place in **Elmwood Hall** in The Queen's University, Belfast. Elmwood Hall is at the junction of University Road and Elmwood Avenue, directly across from the main QUB Lanyon Building. It is adjacent to the Students' Union.

For those arriving by train at Central Station and by air at Belfast City Airport, taxis are available at the exit of each terminal. For those arriving into Belfast International Airport, there is a regular bus connection through to Belfast Central Bus Station and from where it is possible to get a taxi to Queen's University. Both Belfast City Airport and Belfast International Airport are served by budget airlines. Carriers are listed on the airport websites

Cost

No charge is being made for participation in the conference. The event is supported by a grant from ESPON for transnational networking activities. Lunches are provided on 22 and 23 February, but other meals and accommodation are the responsibility of participants themselves. Some places have been reserved for students and junior researchers.

WHAT IS ESPON?

- ESPON is the European Spatial Planning Observation Network.
- It is funded by the member states of the EU (and also Norway and Switzerland) and by the European Regional Development Fund.
- It was set up in 2002, with a brief to develop research around the themes of the European Spatial Development Perspective.
- It undertakes research into spatial development across the 25 member states of the EU, plus Norway, Switzerland, Romania and Bulgaria. It is the first time that a systematic spatial research programme has been conducted at this extensive scale.
- ESPON research is undertaken by transnational project groups and is mainly focused on data at NUTS 2 and NUTS3 levels.
- ESPON research informs policy-making in the European Commission (e.g. in the Third Cohesion Report) and in the member states.

Recent ESPON reports have looked at polycentric development; urban-rural relations; trends in infrastructure; telecommunications; management of Europe's natural heritage; the territorial impact of the Common Agricultural Policy; and territorial impacts of EU R&D policies.

Visit the ESPON website www.espon.lu. The UK's ESPON website is: www.espon.org.uk

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