Recent policy development for territorial cohesion under the European Spatial Development Perspective

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Japan, June 2006
Beginning in 1989, European countries have started a political process to agree on common goals and strategies for the development of the European territory.

These efforts have different names (in English, but even more in the different European languages!)

- European Spatial Development Policy (before 2004)
  - European Territorial (Development) Policy
  - European Spatial (or territorial) Planning
- Policy for territorial cohesion (or TC policy) (after 2004)
European Spatial Development Policy

- European Spatial Development Policy tries to establish a joint territorial thinking and policy at an international level.
- It was initiated in the EU context and has its main focus on the EU territory (although many concrete actions include non-EU neighbour countries).
- So basically, European Spatial Development Policy, if translated into the East-Asian context, would refer to a joint spatial development policy of neighbouring East Asian countries rather than to national spatial planning (e.g. in Japan).
- But until now, ESDP is the only such cooperation model in the world! Could it be adapted to the East-Asian context?
EU-15

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EU+4

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European Spatial Development Policy

- What has been its background?
- How has it been organised?
- Who has the responsibility / initiative?
- What has been done so far?
- Who is implementing the policy?
- What is the actual agenda?
From the first steps of European integration until the establishment of the "common market" in 1992, more and more policies with territorial impacts have been established at EU level:

- Agricultural policies (CAP)
- Regional policies (Structural Funds)
- Transport policies (TEN)
- Environmental policies
- Regulatory policies (competition rules)

For these EU policies the “Community Method” is applied for decision making, i.e. (simplified):

- the European Commission takes the initiative and develops a proposal for a specific measure
- the Council of (national) Ministers takes a decision on this proposal
- and the European Parliament agrees to this decision
So there were Councils for sectoral policies at EU level (like agriculture, regional policies, transport etc.), deciding on policies that influence the development of the European territory and regions, but there was no Council of Spatial Planning Ministers. Spatial development policy was still a national responsibility, and Spatial Planning Ministers were not involved in Council decision on EU level (but have to deal with its consequences on national level).

It was argued that
- a spatial coordination of sectoral decisions already on the EU level would contribute to more efficient and coordinated results and would help to avoid unforeseen contradictory effects
- and that a two-fold coordination would be needed:
  - horizontal coordination between sector policies at EU level
  - vertical coordination of EU policies and national policies
background

- At the same time the EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, Jacques Delors, demanded a common vision for the future development of the EU territory.
- This quest was addressing the Spatial Planning Ministers, but as said there was no legal nor institutional basis for such activities on EU level.
- So the EU Commission invited the national Spatial Planning Ministers to a meeting in Liege in 1989
- and Commission and Ministers decided that a common spatial development perspective should be elaborated.
- and they established a joint Committee on Spatial Development (CSD) as a working party responsible for drafting the ESDP.
- The CSD was financed by the Commission who also provided the secretariat function, and it was chaired by the Member States (the EU Presidency).
How?

- So, 1999 can be seen as the birth year of the ESDP process,
- and the ESDP was jointly elaborated by the 15 EU Member States and the European Commission.
- Roughly, the process can be described as a series of 5-years periods marked by the milestones:
  - 1989: 1st meeting of the spatial planning ministers
  - 1994: adoption of the guiding principles for cooperation
  - 1999: adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) document
  - 2004: launch of the “Rotterdam process”
The ESDP process I (1989-1994)

- Since 1989 the Ministers met regularly twice a year.
- The (at that time: 12) EU member states had 12 different planning systems. “Spatial planning” was not a concept used in all member states.
- So, the first simple question was: who will represent the single EU member states in this exercise as the national “Minister for Spatial Planning”?
- The national nominations were heterogeneous.
- The views on what is or should be Spatial Planning in a European context was as diverse as these choices and the planning systems among the countries were.
The ESDP process I (1989-1994)

- Although was a basic consensus between European Commission and Member States that more territorial reasoning and coordination of EU policies would be needed, the question was:
  - who should be responsible, the European Commission or the Spatial Planning Ministers of the EU Member States?
  - The EU Member States, in their majority, were not willing to transfer any new competencies for “spatial planning” to the EU level and insisted that they would take the lead, i.e. applying the “intergovernmental method” instead of the “Community method”.

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The ESDP process I (1989-1994)

As result of this first phase the ministers decided upon the basic principles for European Spatial Development Policy.

With the “basic principles” for European Spatial Development Policy (adopted in Leipzig in 1994) the ministers laid the ground for the further elaboration of the ESDP, agreeing that

- the ESDP will be drafted through the cooperation of all EU member states (and not by the EU Commission)
- there will be no additional legal competencies allocated to the European Commission
- the cooperation is voluntary and legally non-binding
- a network of research institutes shall be established to provide scientific support for the drafting of the ESDP
The ESDP process II (1994-1999)

- The second phase concentrated on generating more knowledge on the territorial state and trends (incl. scenarios) of the EU territory.
- A first official draft was presented in 1997 (“Noordwijk document”) which contained many results, incl. three core maps showing the main challenges for the urban system, the transport system and the natural and cultural aspects.
- However, a political agreement on these maps was very difficult to achieve.
- The final document has eliminated most maps and relies more on verbal descriptions of the political challenges and options for European spatial development.
Main elements of the ESDP

The ESDP describes the main challenges of the European spatial development.

It defines three main subjects for intervention:
- Creating a more polycentric urban system
- Providing a more equal access to (transport) networks
- Securing a prudent management of our natural and cultural heritage

60 policy options are described with proposals how to support these three subjects.
The ESDP process III (1999-2004)

After the adoption of the ESDP in Potsdam (May 1999), a second meeting (Nov. 1999 in Tampere) adopted an “action plan” with 12 actions to implement the ESDP.

The three most important actions shall be presented here:

- Establishing an EU Community initiative to support transnational cooperation of regions and cities
- Establishing a European research network (ESPON)
- A deeper communication and adaptation of the ESDP goals and options to the wider territory of the (presently: 47) member states of the Council of Europe
The ESDP process III (1999-2004)

- With the adoption of the ESDP action programme the institutional structure of this process, the Committee for Spatial Development, was abolished.
- The European Commission withdrew its support for the CSD, and the Member States alone were not able to maintain this important basic structure.
- This was partly due to the fact that the Member States change their EU presidencies every six months which makes institutional continuity extremely difficult.
- In addition, the Member States concentrated on the ESDP implementation (with new institution structures for ESPON and transnational cooperation) and/or on the new SUD committee.
- However, cooperation shifted to the “working level” and there were no more regular meetings of Ministers during the next 5 years.
The ESDP process III (1999-2004)
Transnational Cooperation: Interreg III B

- Based on the ESDP proposals, the EU Commission has established an EU Community initiative to support transnational cooperation of regions and cities in ten European transnational cooperation areas.

- This approach seems to be comparable with the idea of the Japanese 5th CNDP to create 4 national axial zones that develop their own specific potentials through networking including international interactions with neighbours.
The ESDP process III (1999-2004) ESPON

- ESPON
  - Organisation of an Interreg programme
    - 35 Projects carried out by TPGs
    - MC as policy anchorage
    - ECPs as national contact points
    - CU keeping it all together
  - Topics
    - Territorial structure and trends
    - Territorial impacts of EU policies
    - Scientific coordination, conclusions, scenarios
    - Data and indicators

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The ESDP process III (1999-2004)  
Council of Europe

- In 2000 the member states of the Council of Europe adopted the “Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development of the European Continent” thus widening the ESDP idea to the larger European context of 45 member states.

- The Ministers agreed upon a "10-Point Programme for Greater Cohesion among the Regions of Europe" serving to implement the CEMAT Guiding Principles. One of them is the project "CEMAT Model Regions", where Germany cooperates with the Russian Federation and Armenia to apply the CEMAT Guiding Principles through concrete transnational projects.
The ESDP process IV (2004-2007)
The Rotterdam-Leipzig process

- In their meetings in Rotterdam (2004) and Luxembourg (2005) the Ministers agreed to develop a common document, a territorial agenda for the European territory.

- This territorial agenda is:
  - based on the agreements of ESPON
  - taking into account the latest developments in the EU (EU enlargement)
  - as well as new challenges (Lisbon strategy, demographic change, energy supply and climate change)
  - and reflects the notion of “Territorial Cohesion” in the European Constitution

- The territorial agenda will be “evidence-based” and refer to an analysis on the “State and Perspectives of the European territory” which is provided by ESPON results.

- The territorial agenda will be adopted in a ministerial meeting in Leipzig in May 2007.
Territorial challenges of Europe

- Large disparities between regions
  - Already for the EU-15 the ESDP has coined the term of a central “pentagon” where 50% of the GDP is produced on just 20% of the EU-15 territory (our “Pacific Belt”)
  - and within member states there are often big divides (Germany, Italy).
  - After the enlargement of 2004 the disparities between the old (western) and new (eastern) Member States are huge – and the next enlargement round will further increase disparities within EU
  - The new Member states are growing faster than the old ones, but
  - much of the development is concentrated in (Eastern) metropolitan regions
GDP/cap. + GDP growth = economy

Lisbon performance

GDP/empl.
empl. rate
R&D expend.
R&D personell
high edu

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Ageing population and declining regions

- The European population is rapidly ageing.
- This is different from country to country and from region to region.
- Most affected are more peripheral regions with low population densities.
- With the outmigration of younger mobile persons some of them started a vicious circle downwards which seems hardly to be stopped.
- The public budgets (again partly because of ageing and rising social security spending) forbid to spend money irrespective of potential return.
- What are the specific needs (and potentials) of these regions?
  - Adapting infrastructure to population losses and ageing
  - Re-building old / outdated / overdimensioned structures
  - Providing new infrastructure for a revival (e.g. Telecom broadband IS) ??
weak points in Demography

Population density +
Aged population -
Reproduction potential +
Population growth in percent +

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factor 5: demography
Sustainable energy supply

- If energy prices further rise and/or supply problems occur: which European regions will be most affected?
- How can alternative new energy sources be developed? Which regions are apt for this? How will it change their landscape and ecological features?
- How can we save energy (e.g. in housing or transport sectors)? Do we loose (or gain) economic competitiveness by saving energy? Where are the most efficient regional potentials?
Lead questions for the territorial agenda

- How can spatial / territorial planning (thinking) contribute to the successful implementation of the Lisbon-Gothenburg strategy?
- What are the specific potentials ("territorial capital") of different regions?
- How can we create win-win-situations for joint acting?
- How can we best make use of the diversities but avoid growth of disparities?
Priorities of the European Territorial Agenda:

- Based on evidence about territorial challenges the European Territorial Agenda and the background document Territorial State and Perspective of Europe will deal with the following 6 priorities:
  - Promoting urban development networking in a polycentric pattern
  - Strengthening urban-rural partnership
  - Promoting trans-national competitive and innovative clusters and regions
  - Strengthening trans-European networks
  - Promoting trans-European risk management
  - Strengthening ecological structures and cultural resources
evidence for policy priorities (1)

- Promoting urban development networking in a polycentric pattern
  - International competitive metropolitan areas
  - National cities and towns outside metropolitan areas
evidence for policy priorities (2)

- Strengthening urban-rural partnership
  - Rural-urban partnership
  - Cities as development poles
  - Services of general interest
evidence for policy priorities (3)

- Promoting trans-national competitive and innovative clusters and regions
  - International identity of specialised cities and regions
  - Priorities for cooperation and synergies in investments
Strengthening trans-European networks

- Transport networks
- ICT networks
- Energy networks
evidence for policy priorities (5)

- Promoting trans-European risk management
  - Trans-European technological hazards
  - Costal zones, maritime basins, river basins and mountain areas
evidence for policy priorities (6)

- Strengthening ecological structures and cultural resources
  - Main trans-European ecological structures
  - Main trans-European cultural resources
The ESDP process IV (2007-2009)

- Future decisions on the European agenda for the years after 2007:
  - Revision of the EU budget
    - What happens to CAP?
    - What happens to Regional Policy?
  - Renewal of the debate on the EU constitution
    - Will there be a Community responsibility for territorial cohesion?
Some fundamental political pre-conditions for territorial cohesion

- Peace and reconciliation formed the fundamental base in Europe for everything that should follow.
- In Europe, neighbouring countries decided directly after WW II to lay the grounds for peace through strong cooperation and integration.
- One approach was the foundation of the Council of Europe (1949) which some saw as a nucleus for future “United States of Europe” (which it became not).
- The other approach was the integration of the (French and German) coal and steel industries into one supranational system (ECSC, 1951) (from which the EU developed).
- But also bilateral acts were essential: Adenauers meeting with De Gaulle (1962) and Brandt’s kneeling at the Warsaw Ghetto (1970) were two important steps for reconciliation in Europe and laid the grounds for peaceful cooperation.
Preconditions for a joint international spatial development policy

- Besides the fundamental topics of peace and reconciliation,
- a joint spatial development policy needs a strong will to create something new together, to cooperate and to generate “win-win-situations”.
- It further needs (potential) partners on both sides with comparable backgrounds (i.e. the “spatial planning ministers”) and commitments
- The European example would suggest a stepwise approach, starting with (“simple”) common goals
- The process of cooperation needs leadership
Preconditions for a transnational cooperation of regions and cities

- Regions and cities must have a sound legal basis to act freely in an international setting.
- The possibility to cooperate in an international setting does however not automatically lead to actual cooperation.
- Rather, regional / local actors need additional incentives for cooperation (money for the region, career for individual actors).
- Regions and cities must have partners of similar status in their neighbouring countries (who have the same possibilities to cooperate).
- You need skills (language!) and time to get acquainted to your partners situation.
- Meetings for exchange can be a start, but in the longer term you need concrete common projects.
Preconditions for an international network of spatial researchers

- A research network could be a could start to identify common challenges and create a sound knowledge base and jointly agreed views on the state and perspectives of territorial development
- ESPON experience shows that national cultures and traditions also apply to scientific knowledge and knowledge-based policies
- Also traditions of communication between scientists (analysts) and politicians (or planners) can be very different (e.g. presenting results in maps was almost impossible in the ESDP process)
- Exchange of scientific views can be interesting (as a first step to deeper cooperation), but producing and agreeing on joint results in international teams can be really challenging!
- International research programmes need international management structures and should be jointly funded
Conclusions

- Many elements of the European Spatial Development Policy can be related to the existence of the supra-national European Union and are thus not applicable to the Japanese situation.
- However, some elements like an international research network or transnational cooperation programmes for regions and cities could very well be adapted to the East-Asian situation.
- However, territorial cohesion is bound to the will to promote more regional cooperation and integration. And this again is very much dependent on the perception of possible win-win-situations and the mutual trust and friendship between neighbours.
- Territorial cohesion is only to a very low degree a technical challenge for (social) engineers but rather a very basic political question of long-term political strategy and commitment. Given this, territorial cohesion can be achieved also in a non-supranational context. But a minimum degree of institutionalization will be needed to base it on solid grounds.
Thank you for your attention!

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