

ISSUES OF TERRITORIALITY AND TERRITORIAL COHESION IN THE REVISION OF THE TSP AND THE TERRITORIAL AGENDA – A SORT OF CONNECTION BETWEEN GEOGRAPHY AND REGIONAL POLICY

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Abstract

After Hungary was asked according to the Territorial Agenda (TA), agreed in the informal ministerial meeting under the German Presidency in May 2007, it undertook the responsibility to evaluate and review the TA and update the closely related Territorial States and Perspectives of the European Union (TSP). The TA has a key importance due to the fact that it had been the first document which identified joint action oriented framework of spatial (territorial) policy on the EU level. The TSP (as basic evidence of the TA) in its more synthetic chapters attempted to identify more integrated territorial structures of the European territory including main geographic dimensions such as north-south and east-west dichotomies, polycentricity and urban-rural patterns. Due to the changes in the driving forces and the new conditions of an enlarged EU, the content and also the function should be revised. The paper is aiming to introduce some of the main findings of the TSP/ TA revision process with special reference to the new aspects and trends related to the territorial structures of the Union and the spatial structure of Europe. Finally, some solutions will be introduced which could help to enhance the currently not enough strong territorial approach within TSP and TA.

Keywords: TSP, TA, territorial cohesion, EU, macroregions

Rezumat

Aspecte legate de teritorialitate și coeziune teritorială în revizuirea PTS și a Agendei teritoriale – o legătură între geografie și politică regională. După ce Ungariei i s-a cerut conform Planului Teritorial (PT) și s-a aprobat la ședința ministerială neoficială sub conducerea Germaniei din mai 2007, aceasta și-a asumat responsabilitatea de a evalua și de a revizui PT-ul și să actualizeze Perspectivele Teritoriale asociate ale Statelor Uniunii Europene (PTS). PT-ul are o importanță deosebită, deoarece a fost primul document care a identificat acțiunile comune ale politicii spațiale (teritoriale) orientate în funcție de context la nivelul UE. PTS-ul (ca dovadă de bază a PT-ului) în capitolele sale cele mai sintetizate încearcă să identifice structurile teritoriale integrate ale teritoriului european, inclusiv dimensiunile geografice principale precum dicotomiile nord-sud sau est-vest, policentricitatea și modelele urban-rural. Datorită modificărilor din forțele de acționare și a noilor condiții date de o UE lărgită, atât conținutul, cât și funcția trebuie revizuite. Lucrarea are ca scop introducerea principalelor rezultate ale procesului de revizuire a PT/ PTS-ului cu referire specială la aspectele și tendințele legate de structurile teritoriale ale Uniunii și la structura spațială a Europei. În cele din urmă, vor fi introduse unele soluții care pot ajuta la intensificarea abordării teritoriale care în prezent nu este suficient de puternică în PTS și PT.

Cuvinte-cheie: PTS, PT, coeziune teritorială, UE, macroregiuni

INTRODUCTION

After Hungary was asked according to the Territorial Agenda (TA), agreed in the informal ministerial meeting under the German Presidency in May 2007; it undertook the responsibility to evaluate and review the TA and update the closely related Territorial States and Perspectives of the European Union (TSP). The TA has a key importance due to the fact that it had been the first document which identified joint action oriented framework of spatial (territorial) policy on the EU level, defining the challenges and the priorities

related to the territorial state and structures of the EU. So, the TA can be assessed as the first step of a common European territorial policy addressed to territorial dimensions of several thematic issues such as climate change, growth and innovation, culture, environment, etc. Together with the TSP – which serves as a basic evidence for the analysis of the TA – both documents are basic elements of the European regional (spatial) development and planning scene.

Our article, after a general introductory part about the importance of territoriality in planning activity and the connecting role of the notion “Territorial

Cohesion”, deals with the first results and conclusions of the aforementioned update and revision processes. The main focus is on the relatively weak territorial dimension of TSP 2007 and TA 2007 and on the attempts of the international drafting team (led by VÁTI Hungarian Public Limited Company for Regional development and Town Planning) to improve the territorial contents of the documents. Among these attempts the article introduces in so many words the new intended chapter of the TSP2011 draft dealing with the main geographical zones of Europe; a kind of territorially synthetic part of TSP2011 and the delimitation of the units which the subchapter describes.

The importance and the issues of territoriality in planning

One of the first main results of the revision processes has been the relatively weak territorial approach of the two documents – although both of them are (at least in their names) territorial planning documents. Of course, readers could ask why do we emphasize the importance of territoriality in the planning activity? In our opinion territorial sensitiveness or territorial consciousness has to be inevitable a component of the strategic thinking. The appropriate planning activity (not only the actual territorial planning, but also the sectorial (thematic) planning activity) should deal with the territorial differences/ disparities, the regional characteristics due to the fact that every sector exists in the space. Development paths cannot be identified independently from the space/ territory in which the subject of the planning operates. Furthermore, nowadays, when within the European (regional) development policy the notion of the place based approach or the main message of the “Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion –Turning diversity into strength” gains their momentum the focus on the territorial differences within the planning activity becomes more and more important. In the same time the special endowments of regions, territorial units come to the fore to use their territorial capital through development actions.

An effective tool that can contribute to achieve territorial cohesion is the new policy concept called “new paradigm of regional policy” by OECD and the place-based approach by the Barca report, which means the practical implementation of the subsidiarity principle and multilevel governance in territorial development and policy. The objective of the place-based concept is to reduce persistent inefficiency (underuse of resources resulting in the income below the potential in both short and long-run) and persistent social exclusion (primarily, an

excessive number of people below a given standard in terms of income and other features of well-being) in specific places. Places are defined through the policy process from a functional perspective as regions in which a set of conditions conducive to development apply more than they do in larger or smaller areas. This is, in the Report’s view, the appropriate and modern way to interpret the task set by the EU Treaty to promote “harmonious development” and to tackle the “disparities” of the regions and “regional backwardness” by means of cohesion.” (Barca F., 2009, pp. xi). Basically, the concept attracts our attention to the special endowments of different territories and the different ways of development based on these features (TA Outline. Draft version, 2010).

It is worth clarifying what do we understand exactly about territoriality, territorial approach? According to us territoriality means first of all an approach focusing on territories instead of sectors or thematic issues like environment, economy, social problems etc. This territorial approach puts special emphasis on the territorial structures and territorial types of the analysed territorial unit (continent/ region/ country). In planning documents most of the time the situation analysis parts might contain this kind of analyses, evaluations; or the strategic parts in the objective structure could comprise territorial-like special objectives/ priorities.

The role of Territorial Cohesion

Another crucial moment in the European spatial policy is the increasing importance of the notion of Territorial Cohesion. The Treaty of Lisbon signed in December 2007 entered into force in December 2009. With the changes made by this treaty territorial cohesion was entered into the text. It defines that the Union “shall promote economic, social and territorial cohesion, solidarity among Member States.” (Art. 3 TEU); territorial cohesion however needs to be further clarified.

According to the “Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion – Turning territorial diversity into strength” the main function of territorial cohesion (TC) is to ensure the harmonious development of all types of places and make sure that the citizens of these places are able to make the most inherent features of these territories. As a matter of fact TC is a means of transforming diversity into an asset contributing to sustainable development of the entire EU. Consequently TC aims at better territorial state of the EU with efficient, sustainable territorial structures and harmonious territorial patterns. It is very important to secure the multilevel understanding of TC – not only at the European

level, but also on global, macro-regional, national, regional and sub-regional/ local scale. The main justification of TC is its integrative character. TC is a tool to build networks of functional areas.

Territorial cohesion is a crucial issue also for TA 2020 (the revised TA document) on the one hand through the contribution of the regions, local levels and other territories to common priorities (e.g. competitiveness, climate change, etc.). On the other hand it plays a key role to secure a “territorial optimum” both through the support of (long term) efficiency of the sector policy interventions and through the contribution to increase the living quality of citizens experienced at local level. Territorial approach is a key moment within the TC approach as a tool for harmonizing different development paradigms such as sustainability, convergence (solidarity between regions) and regional competitiveness.

In the implementation there is a shared competence between the Member States and the Union in the field of economic, social and territorial cohesion (Art. 5c TFEU). Member States shall exercise their competence to the extent in which the Union does not exercise it. This gives a stronger base for joint action in pursuing territorial cohesion, however the subsidiarity principle has to be respected and the Union shall act only if and in so far as the objectives cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States at the central, regional or local level, but can be better achieved on European level (Art. 5 TEU). Policies of the Union have to pursue the goal of territorial cohesion, and Member States shall conduct and coordinate their economic policies to attain territorial cohesion (Art. 175 TFEU).

If we would like to summarize the double understanding of territorial cohesion we can say there are two sides of the coin. On one hand the understanding of the mechanisms – in other words territoriality should be taken into account in every situation to prove horizontality of the notion. It means that all kind of territories should be inspired and supported to utilize their territorial capital and secure territorial co-ordination of different development intentions of different sectors on a given territorial unit. On the other hand the space-related understanding of territorial cohesion aims at the identification and formation of territorial structures even of given sectors/ themes to secure proper territorial consciousness in every sector related development activity.

Another interesting issue is that how we can use territories in planning and programming. In quantitative term which is the most traditional use of territorial structures/ types in planning; certain

territories get priority and more resources to support them (usually their catching up process). In this case the key question is: “Who gets the support (=money)” and “How much”? In qualitative term – which approach gathers ground recently – the focus is on the idea that different spaces with different characteristics need specific solutions. In this case every place (territorial unit) could be part of one or more territorial types and there are no more and less important types of territories. The key question is: “How and what to do in a certain spaces”? In our opinion this latter approach is more suitable regarding territorial planning and territorial cohesion to correlate with the theory that territorial cohesion is not about the financial support (that is the function of regional policy), but about the ways and methods, the coordination and planning mechanisms.

TSP update and TA revision – the mission: enhancing territorial approach in TSP and TA

With regard to the decision of the Ministers responsible for the spatial planning and development of the Territorial Agenda at their informal ministerial meeting under the German EU Presidency in 2007, the Hungarian Presidency evaluates and reviews the Territorial Agenda in the first half of 2011. Hungary through VÁTI plays a leading role in these processes as lead partner of the working group and the drafting team of the revision since the autumn of 2009.

In order to introduce the two documents shortly the TSP serves as a situation analysis of the current European sectorial and territorial trends and territorial impacts of common EU policies. The Territorial Agenda based on the results of TSP has a mission as a policy paper to develop and specify the territorial perspective/ vision wider than what it is indicated in main EU-policy papers, to underline and specify the most important territorial implications of different EU-policies, to indicate important territorial structures which should be taken in consideration at EU level and as well as at the national level and to identify some of the most important principles, instruments and mechanisms and priorities for the promotion of better territorial cohesion in Europe.

The first versions of both documents were prepared/ adopted in 2007. Since then significant changes have happened in the European and global trends, and in the European policy context; the interpretation of the concept of territorial cohesion has further developed and new challenges of territorial development have emerged. The changes in the circumstances underline the need to rethink

the trends and the challenges introduced in the TSP 2007 and further develop the territorial priorities of the EU, strengthening the territoriality of the objectives/ priorities to serve better as a territorial compass for EU and for the national sector policies as well as to point out messages for the regional, subregional and cross-border territories. The framework of implementation has also changed once they adopted the changes within the Treaty and the implementation mechanisms shall be improved based on the experiences with the actions taken in order to achieve the goals of the Territorial Agenda.

The TSP and the Territorial Agenda are evaluated and reviewed in cooperation of the Member States and the Commission to increase the validity of the objectives and to ensure that the objectives are in line with other policy developments and that will be implemented based on the consensus of the parties participating at the revision and the implementation of the Territorial Agenda.

Summarizing our experiences during the revision process so far, territorial content seemed to be weak in both documents. Due to the fact that both documents are (or should be) territorial oriented; the weak appearance of territorial approach was a quite displeasing surprise. Steady opinion of the drafting was that in the updated TSP and the revised TA territorial aspects should get significantly greater emphasis to enable the 2 materials to act as the part of the basic documents of territorial idea and the notion of territorial cohesion.

TSP – need to enhance the territorial content of sectorial chapters' and the propagation of a new, synthetic territorial chapter

Regarding TSP the improvement of territoriality could be fed from 4 main sources. (1) Currently the thematic subchapters of the Trends chapter that deal with the sectorial trends miss the identification of the special territorial structures/ types of the given sectors. In the updated TSP these thematic (economy, social issues, climate change, environment, culture, transport, etc.) subchapters have to be completed with relevant territorial content, e.g. regarding climate change with the main zones of Europe facing different challenges connecting the topic (e.g. south - desertification, north - increasing precipitation etc.). (2) The urban-rural dimension of the material, which is quite strong even in the old TSP, has to be enhanced further due to the fact that the importance of the topic has come into the fore recently (ESPON Project 1.1.2.; Urban-rural seminars in Brussels in 2008-09; formation of an international working group on the Implementation of Action 1.1a of the

urban-rural Issues within the Context of the Territorial Agenda of the European Union etc.). (3) The group of „regions with geographic specialties” has to be completed in the updated TSP with some new elements which on the one hand try to react to the special characteristics of the new member states, on the other hand counterweight the unbalanced structure of the current types (only mountainous, coastal, remote and island regions are mentioned). A question comes up, if we talk about mountain regions why do not we talk about plain regions? If we talk about coastal regions why do not we talk about landlocked regions? This issue of unbalances should be solved during the planning process. The 4th tool that enhances the territorial content of the TSP is the most important and synthetic one. It is introduced on a more detailed way hereinafter.

Currently, there is one subchapter within the TSP that deals directly with territorial issues (called “Territorial structures and challenges”) and additionally a general preamble of the “Trends Chapter” mentions some structural dimension, and the fact that “Northern and southern Europe have different territorial potential which shape their way into the future...”. This kind of contents is worth extending. To strengthen the territorial integrative role of the whole material a potential solution could be the creation of a self sufficient territorial chapter (comprising the aforementioned preamble and the current “Territorial structures and challenges” subchapter) that can be completed by a new macro regional (or territorial synthesis) part.

This new part has been elaborated as a result of comprehensive examinations to identify and shortly describe bigger geographical zones within Europe. The aim of this macro regional subchapter is giving a short presentation of the Europe’s main parts synthesizing the messages of the other thematic (sectorial) chapters to the given geographical unit. So the key function is systemization of the territorial content, features and problems and not a new regionalization of Europe. These zones can be assessed as proper tools for the identification of territorial challenges and special problems/ strengths of given territories of Europe. With this method we have access to territorially relevant answers to the main challenges of Europe (such as climate change, ageing and migratory flows etc.). The list of these challenges is geared to the structure of the trends chapter’s thematic subchapters. The use of these categories can be assessed as a representation of the place based approach at higher territorial level.

The question comes up: how many main zones (macroregions) are there? What will be the

background of the delimitation? In the followings we try to answer to these questions. TSP, as a European-wide situation analysis can be based on the descriptions of different sectors of society, economy and environment in various chapters, but the different elements, processes are often closely interlinked, affecting one another in the geographical areas, thus a territorial approach is needed, and the summary of the features in the context of territorial types is expedient.

One way of assessing the state is based on the comparisons of statistical data of different territories (countries, regions), like in the Cohesion Reports or Progress Reports of the EU regional policy. It needs concrete territorial divisions and exact borders, because in this way we can process statistical data. The other way is to write general establishments, like in the current TSP-document. This description is typical at macro-regional level, because usually these territories can be characterized without exact borders, and with similar and different features. The macro-regional summary calls the attention on the (hidden or evident) relations of the territorial processes of the different features in the concrete area, and the uncovered identical problems start collective actions and collaborations between the countries, the regions concerned, and in this way strengthen the learning from each other (best practice).

In the geographical, historical, political studies there are many divisions of Europe, because “European diversity can be discussed at many different geographical levels reaching from general appreciation (...) to more detailed insights” (TSP 2007, p.15), and the division depends on the examined features (geographical position, climate, social, economic state etc.). The standpoints determine the type of a macro-regional division.

In the 19th century, geography used already the classical division based on climate and cardinal points: North-Europe, South-Europe, West-Europe, East-Europe; in this case typical social and economic features are associated with the different natural features. In this system the central part of the continent, Central Europe appeared with intermediate state and indistinct borders; there were many viewpoints in which regions are parts of this area and how it can be characterized. In the second part of the 20th century Central Europe lost its unity because the “Iron Curtain” divided it. The east and west part moved on different paths and drifted apart, so at present these areas differ from each other in social and economic features; it is the base of the distinction between East Central Europe and West Central Europe. But the existence of East Central Europe is significant in other respect as well: this

area distinguishes itself from East Europe. The association of East Central European countries with the EU strengthens this distinction. (After the political transformation Central Europe was restored to life, and became an issue in the political and geographical discussions.)

Between 1965 and 1970 the European Council organized expert conferences to establish the division of the continent. The accepted recommendation was based on the division described on Fig. 1 and was applied in the geography of many countries and after a time in public opinions (Probáld-Szabó, 2005). In this recommendation the existence of Central Europe is admitted, and South-East Europe appears like an independent macro-region.

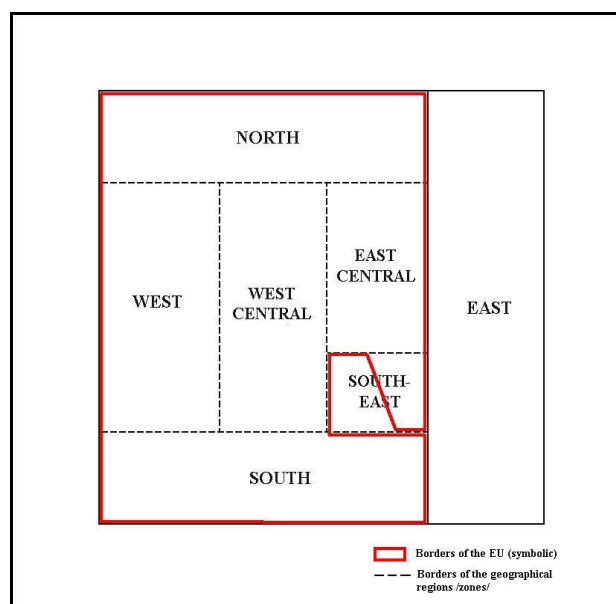


Fig. 1 A Typical Division of Europe in Terms of Regional Geography (after Probáld, F., Szabó, P. 2005)

And what about other opinions? There are a lot of different macroregional divisions of the continent, for example 11 macroregions in an EC document (1994), 7 macroregions in Lever's article from 1996, 3 macroregions in another EC document (2001) and 5 macroregions in Terrasi's work from 2003. Jordan (an American geographer) in his book (“The European culture area”, 1996) described Europe in different respects (population, agriculture, industry and so on) and he came to the conclusion that the recurrent regional patterns presented on the continent are east versus west, north versus south, and core versus periphery, which contrasts are similar to those mentioned above. These relations are current and are discussed in numerous studies, but it seems that there were periods when one was more important than the others.

The developed North and underdeveloped South was the popular macroregional contrast in the seventies and eighties (before the fall of the communism) (Kunzmann 1992), when “western” regional researches only referred to Western Europe. Later, the centre-periphery paradigm, then the “united continent” pushed this relation into the background, and even the economic growth of “European sunbelt” weakened this contrast. In spite of these, the north-south dimension is not a forgotten issue (Armstrong, 1995), and there are a lot of social and economic features whose patterns show this contrast.

The centre versus periphery was the most frequently analyzed contrast in different studies in the eighties and nineties, and the center/ periphery contrast became the main paradigm at this time. The central economic zone is known from the economic history of our continent as the “backbone of Europe”, but most people know this zone as the “blue banana” due to Brunet, or rather after a journalist’s comment (Lever, 1996). In the official documents of the European Communities (firstly in EC 1999) in the last few years the “pentagon” has been a useful model to identify the economic centre of the EU (“the core area of the EU, the pentagon defined by the metropolises of London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Hamburg.” [EC 1999, p.20.]). (About this topic see Szabó, 2008.) The centre-periphery contrast is still analyzed in some studies, although the new mainstream, the “polycentrism” pushes this relation into the background.

The third contrast is the developed West and underdeveloped East. It became a popular contrast in the nineties, after the fall of communism and at the time when the enlargement of the EU was approaching (Heidenreich, 2003). Probably the main dividing line of Europe is the western border of the post socialist countries, this line separates the continent into two parts in the case of most social and economic features.

Measuring these contrasts is a way to analyze them: for example our previous researches show that in the EU27 in the case of GDP and GDP per capita the east-west is the main contrast, and the centre-periphery is the second, but both of them are weakening; the north-south division does not play an important role in this comparison (Szabó, 2006). The results reflect that the development map of Europe is becoming more and more mosaic-like, and so the comparison of these macroregions is becoming more and more disputable in this case: for

example, some studies emphasize that we cannot make a simple model for Europe’s spatial structure, and other articles emphasize that polycentrism is the main feature of the continent’s development spatial structure (this opinion reflects the increasing contrast of cities and rural areas in Europe). But we cannot forget that there are social, economic features which divide and will divide the continent into macroregions, and among them there are north-south, east-west and centre-periphery with a determinant role. Therefore, Terrasi (2003) emphasizes that the European regional policy must pay more attention to the macrospatial structure which lies behind the regional development processes.

Currently, there is no universally accepted macro division of Europe – in geographic terms (trying to take more features into consideration) Europe is usually divided to seven parts (or six parts, if South-East is not separated from South): North, South (and South East), West, West Central, East Central and East. (Fig. 1) In our division there are four parts: North, South, East Central and West & West Central, because in the present the area of the EU does not extend over East Europe and South East Europe (and TSP and TA focuses only on the EU’s territory), and West and West Central are not separated, because the dividing lines of social and economic features are faint between them. (Of course these macro-regions can be subdivided into more types, like urban-rural, coastal-inland, mountainous-plain zones, and the macro-regions partly overlap each other).

During the DT meetings came up the idea to consider the relationship of these main zones with regions of current transnational programmes. Regarding to those current mezzo regions of Transnational Programmes under the European Territorial Cooperation Objective in our opinion there is unambiguously strong coherence with the recommended zones. If we group some of these mezzo regions (e.g. Baltic Sea and Northern Periphery constitute the NORTHERN zone) the result is very similar to those 4 units identified by the new subchapter. Vast majority of the functional mezzo regions of the European Territorial Cooperation Objective is included in the 4 greater zones that are being identified. To show the relationship between these main zones and the transnational programme of regions and to avoid misunderstandings and to enhance transparency, in Fig. 2 we present the 4 zones and the transnational mezzo regions simultaneously.

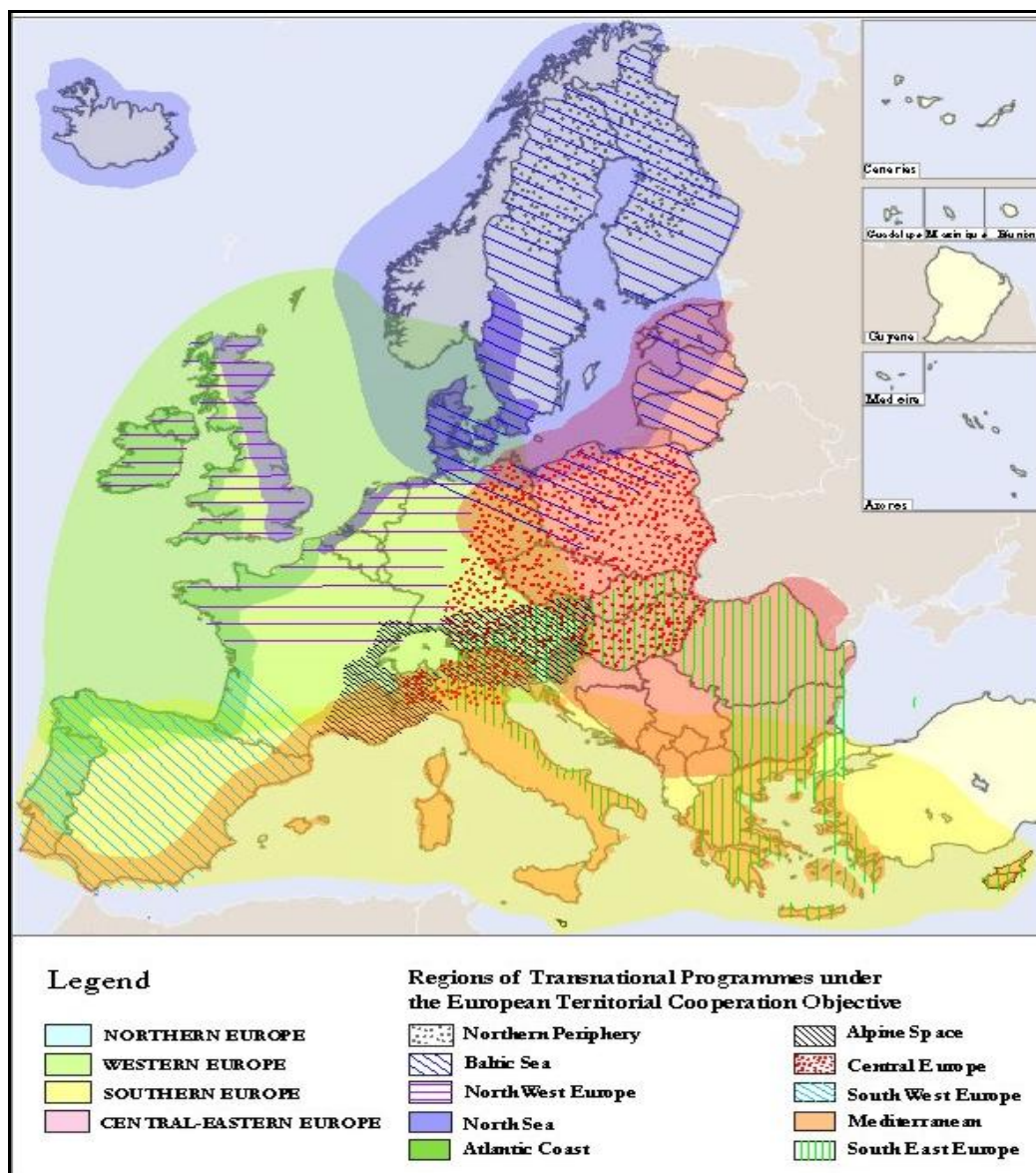


Fig. 2 The hypothetical geographical regions of Europe and their relations to the regions of Transnational programmes within the period 2007-2013

Additionally, important characteristic of the identified zones is that their borders between each other are not sharp boundaries but overlapping frontiers. For instance some areas (e.g. the Baltic States) can be defined as part both of the “Northern zone” and in the same time of the “Eastern zone” with special challenges related partly to the “northern” and partly to the “eastern” problems. The new subchapter shortly introduces these zones, their basic endowments and characteristics and furthermore the main (territorial) challenges they are facing.

All in all, for the identification and delimitation of bigger zones within Europe as “common denominator” of existing regionalization theories, results of scientific projects, practical life and real flows, currently the above mentioned 4 main zones seem to be the most compromising solution.

The Improvement of the territorial content in TA – new challenges, new priority structure and a completely new chapter

Regarding the Territorial Agenda the enhancement of territoriality seemed to be necessary as well as in the case of the TSP. The structure of TA and the content of its main parts have changed significantly during the planning process so far. The main changes can be summarized below.

The „Old TA” (TA 2007) comprised only a short introductory chapter with the title „Strengthening Territorial Cohesion” mostly about related aims and principles. The new TA being currently prepared will dedicate a longer chapter for the topic as an indication of the extended role of territorial cohesion, dealing with the issues of territorial

cohesion's appearance in the Lisbon Treaty; its contribution to the EU 2020, utilization of territorial diverse local potentials; the wise management of territory and space consciousness. This extended chapter can be assessed as a reaction to the changed policy framework.

The "Old TA" contained 6 challenges. The new one – as things stand – will comprise 6+2; the first six are similar with the old ones, but with improved territorial dimension; the 2 additional ("Long term effects of global economic and financial crisis on Europe" and "Territorial exclusion") try to react to current challenges and territorial matters.

The priority structure of the TA 2007 will also be changed. Instead of the original six priorities in the new material the priority chapter will be split up into 2 main parts. The first one ("Overall territorial priorities") will comprise those priorities which

were also present in the old TA but they were made more territorial. Good example is the "Strengthening of ecological and cultural networks" priority in which special types of territories will be mentioned regarding their difficulties and challenges they are facing with as a consequence of climate change's impacts. Second part of the priority chapter is about specific considerations for different types of territories such as shrinking urban regions; regions of structural transition; diverse types of rural territories; remote peripheral areas; urban motors; areas of cross border and transnational cooperation and regions with special geographic characteristics. The new TA will comprise recommendations for these unique territorial types. Figure 3 summarizes the new challenges and the priority structure.

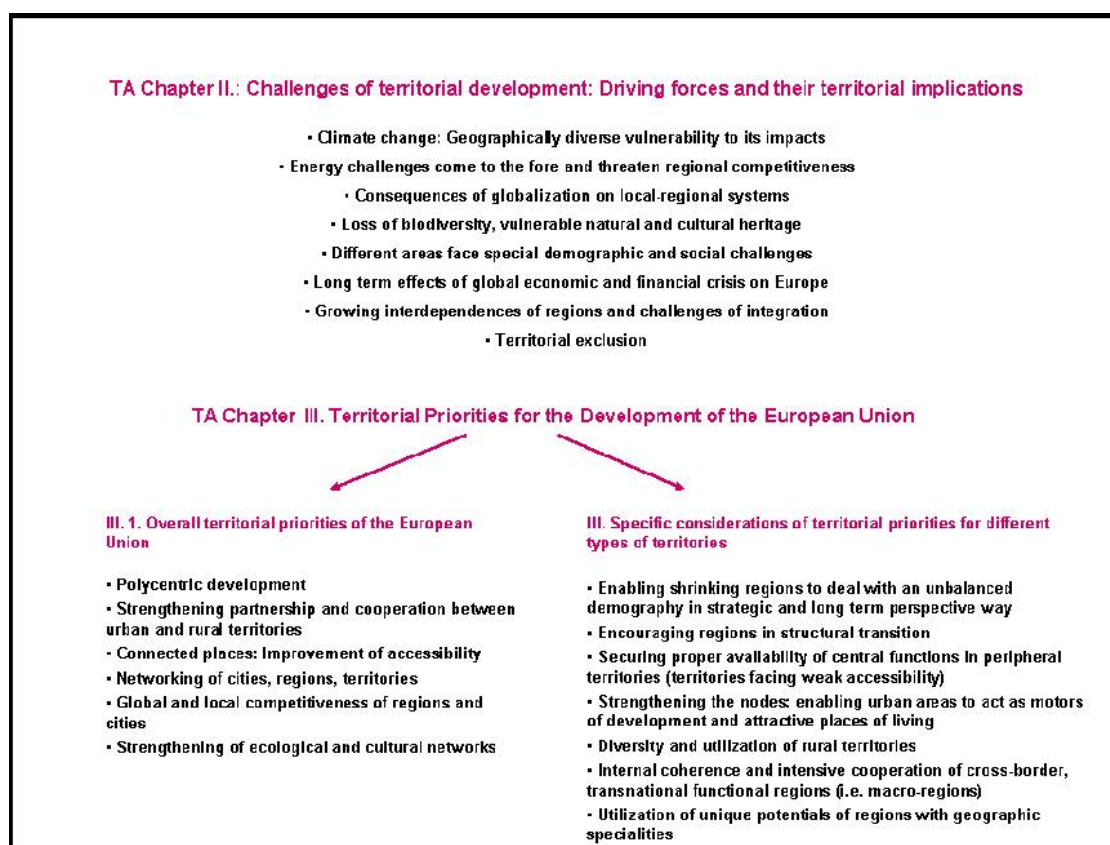


Fig. 3 Current, hypothetical structure of challenges and priorities of the TA2020 Outline

The "Implementation part" about the implementation of TA's recommendations was not a strong chapter in the TA 2007. In contrast with it, the revised version will deal with the ways of Territorial Cohesion in a longer chapter that will be more concrete than the old one and will put greater emphasis on the question of "How can the objectives and priorities of the TA be implemented?"

Finally, TA 2011 will comprise also a brand new chapter with special recommendations for the sectorial policies in order to enhance territory-consciousness of sectorial policies as well. As things stand, this new part of TA recommended by VÁTI is supported strongly by the Drafting Team and Working Group members as a good tool to enhance territorial aspects dimension of sectorial policies at the EU level.

Afterword

Nevertheless the new mentioned TSP and TA chapter ideas, document structures, analytical tools, the new TA challenges and priorities recommended are now only suggestions. They could be in force only if the European Commission would adopt it after a long series of reconciliations, partnership process, lobby activities and so on. But the working group's and the drafting team's intentions are clear – to strengthen the territorial content and spatial conscious approach of both TSP and TA as much as possible based on the current relatively favorable policy context and on the European regional development scene.

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