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LISBON-GOTHENBURG SCENARIOS

A REVIEW OF ESPON POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction. – The aim of this paper is to review the work of the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON) programme, with a view to assessing its relevance and application to the territorial application of the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies. In addition, the application of the specific work pioneered by the ESPON 3.3 project to the goal of effectively redistributing Structural Fund monies to particular regional needs will be presented. These are explored in greater detail in other parts of this Special Issue. In order to assess the appropriate allocation of resources towards the ambitious goals of fulfilling the aims of the Lisbon and Gothenburg Agendas and balancing regional differences, it is necessary to distinguish between regional disparities, which need to be redressed, and regional diversities, which are considered as a key characteristic of Europe. Identifying these specificities has been at the core of the ESPON work programme and has resulted in a considerable range of region specific research with a focus on future policy direction. Thus to do justice to this work we are not seeking to distil it down to a simple, singular formula, but instead present a survey of its main implications, illustrated by key recommendations that are most relevant to «territorial competitiveness in sustainability».

In the following review, a range of issues relevant to the Lisbon and Gothenburg are first extrapolated from the findings of a targeted selection of ESPON projects. These have been selected on the basis of their relevance to the decisions currently being faced in the light of the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas and in the context of an expanding European Union in which internal borders are being relaxed. For those projects where these considerations are critical, recommendations and scenarios – where made – and their implications for competitiveness and sustainability are considered. The objectives of Lisbon and Gothenburg are then outlined in relation to the specific indicators developed within the ESPON 3.3 project. The approach adopted, with its concentration on the regional level, is intended to offset the predominantly national orientation of much work in this area, characterised by the current preoccupation with the National Action Plans.

The ESPON programme. – The broad aims of ESPON have been to provide: a) a diagnosis of main territorial trends at different scales; b) cartographic images of the major territorial disparities and of their respective intensity; c) integrated concepts, tools and instruments (indicators, databases, methodologies for territorial impact analysis and systematic spatial analyses) through a new «trans-national» scientific community to enable a greater spatial co-ordination of sectoral policies; d) identification of the spatial impact of policies and an analysis of potential scenarios arising from various revisions of Structural Fund instruments.

Underlying these objectives has been an implicit acceptance of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), as developed in 1999, with its guiding principles of: social cohesion, economic competitiveness and environmental sustainability. Clearly the latter two principles fit neatly with those expressed the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas. However, the principles are easier to express in theory than in practice, and this is especially the case where inconsistencies emerge in an attempt to prioritise different goals which may essentially conflict. The challenge is thus two-fold: bridging the gap between existing territorial disparities and bridging the gap between end goals, which in this study is «economic efficiency and environmental sustainability».

There are two main types of ESPON projects, those that focus on specific sectors, the «thematic» projects and those investigating their effects, «policy impact studies». The ESPON project 3.3 from which this paper is drawn, falls into a smaller group of projects; «horizontal and coordinating cross-theme studies», one of the prime intentions of which is to evaluate the results of the other studies in order to provide integrated results such as «indicator systems and data, typologies of territories, spatial development scenarios and conclusions for the territorial development». To this end our paper will give most attention to the thematic projects which have provided data invaluable to the achievement of the Lisbon goals by analysing the comparative advantages of European regions, for instance in locating «hotspots» and «cold spots». These projects have also focused on the economic performance of regions and their levels of employment, as well as where important development factors such as R&D, accessibility, ICT, nature and cultural assets are located. Region specific information important to the fulfilment of the Gothenburg targets is also to be found throughout these projects, a selection of which are discussed below (see references for a full list of ESPON projects which have been reviewed for this paper).

Thematic projects and their policy recommendations. – The first (and one of the most controversial), of the ESPON projects was Project 1.1.1 which investigated the potential in the European territory of polycentric development. Polycentrism is presented by this project as a bridging concept between economic growth, traditionally associated with efficiency and concentration and balanced development, associated with de-concentration. It is proposed as a

means of achieving both economic competitiveness and environmental sustainability. Where GDP per capita is an indicator of competitiveness, polycentric regions are shown to be more competitive, though the strength of the relationship is disputed. Two relevant future scenarios were projected; the first was a continuation of current trends, resulting in a persistence of a single global economic zone, with peripheral areas unable to compete on the international stage. The second, the 'ideal situation scenario' showed increased polycentricity at the intra-urban (micro) level, making city regions stronger and therefore producing a more polycentric national or trans-national urban system at the 'meso' level. In the next step, stronger functional areas at the meso level could work together to produce strongholds for a more balanced Europe, heralding the eventual emergence of several Global Integration Zones in addition to Pentagon at the 'macro' level. The conclusions of this project demand a change in thinking about competitiveness. Rather than associating it with the economic attractiveness of large, particularly capital cities, attention is to be given to making available higher order services and developing functional specialisations to second and lower tier cities. This contributes to sustainable development, reducing the urban sprawl of mono-centric capital cities, as well as broadening of the economic base of areas such that they are capable of competing internationally.

The second project commissioned under the ESPON programme involved an exploration of the relationships between urban and rural areas (Project 1.1.2). At a superficial level the implications of Lisbon and Gothenburg may be expected to target urban and rural areas respectively, and separately, in the sense that competitiveness being associated with urban metropolises and sustainability being a concern related to rural areas. In fact the implications drawn for the agendas by this project were both less explicit and less obvious than this. An exploration of current trends, in particular the enlargement of functional urban areas, were shown to have contributed to an increasing flexibility of employment opportunities which, though positive for competitiveness, has been negative for sustainability due primarily to its association with an increase in work-related travel and the use of private cars. More predictably, the protection of rural assets was proposed as a recommendation for sustainable development and more tenuously to be promoted as a contribution to territorial competitiveness in terms of 'added value'. More specific policy recommendations based on area types can be found in the projects' final report, but it is worth mentioning one 'warning' that interdependence between urban and rural areas 'should not be promoted for its own sake' as the implications for increased interaction may not be environmentally sustainable.

Central to the re-allocation of the Structural Funds, and an issue key to the successful achievement of both the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas, has been the expansion of the European Union. This was explored in the project on 'enlargement and polycentrism' (Project 1.1.3). The context in which this study was conducted was, in short, one in which concerns were being expressed by many policy makers in the EU-15, that the 2004 enlargement may act as a brake

on the potential of achieving the Lisbon objectives. The perspective of the ESPON 1.1.3 team was to assess the process from the positive perspective of offering an economic opportunity, perceived in spatial terms through the development of a new Central Eastern zone of global competitiveness, with scope for 'catch up'. As environmental objectives have been a priority in much pre-accession aid, sustainability goals were also identified as having been respected in the convergence process.

Project conclusions suggested that enlargement represents one of the most important opportunities for the EU to increase international competitiveness, and is precisely in line with the Lisbon/Gothenburg strategy. The reality was admittedly shown to be less promising though, with economic restructuring occurring in the enlargement area from primary sectors to the service sectors, but falling employment levels. The project thus considered the particular effects of enlargement, by focusing attention on the discontinuities and barriers implicit in successful economic integration, recommending a concentration on the identification of these. In addition their study included an analysis of the Trans-national Regions and Trans-national Urban Networks (TUN) which showed parts of the enlargement area with the potential to compete with the Pentagon. The risks and opportunities of enlargement were identified by measuring the regional specialisation and geographic concentration of sector employment in the EU-12, and drafting typologies for particularly vulnerable regions. The special needs of border regions were highlighted with typologies based on the particular barriers to flows of people, goods, services and knowledge. As well as particular 'remedial actions', the primary recommendation was that improving transport links within accession countries would not be sufficient, and that transport links between old and new member states also need to be prioritised.

The effects of selected EU policies on the enlargement area were also assessed in the form of 'policy combinations' (multi-level and inter-sectoral). 'Capacity-based' policy combinations are 'governance orientated' and 'bottom-up', while 'principle-based' policy combinations are more 'top-down' in perspective, geared at what interventions the EU might make to enhance the long term competitive potential of the accession states. The latter include groups of policies targeted at co-operation, transport and cultural interventions. In addition to the focus on transport infrastructure investments in the new member states (and more particularly between new and old member states), suggest a new emphasis on the functional growth of second tier cities. The project suggests that, *a*) the EU funding should be provided to partnerships formed at the regional level – both to draft the plan and to secure its implementation; *b*) small member states should profit from drafting plans in co-operation with neighbouring states; and, *c*) such plans should include policies aimed directly at generating employment in second and lower order cities to increase competitiveness and cohesion in the EU as a whole.

Region specific advice is also presented, most notably for the development of an additional zone of global importance, the promotion of the network of major cities in the 'Triangle of Central Europe', with its potentially high level

of integration and encompassing the area from Warsaw in the east, Poznan in the west and Budapest in the south. This Trans-national Region has to strengthen its relationships with the Pentagon, the wider Baltic area, Poland and the Balkan region. Thus the projects' implications for the delivery of the Lisbon Agenda are more or less in line with those of the Polycentric project (Project 1.1.1).

A project addressing the issues of demography and migration (Project 1.1.4) was of direct relevance to both Lisbon and Gothenburg, specifically the ageing and what has been portrayed as the general stagnation of the EU population. This is of clear concern to the future sustainability and competitiveness of the Continent. One indicator of sustainability is the proportion of the population under 15, while indicators relating to competitiveness concern the vibrancy of the labour market. The projected acceleration of the ageing process and regional population losses are a particular challenge for the realisation of the Lisbon agenda. This is not only an issue in relation to the relative size and strength of the labour force, but also in the light of the associated fall in consumer demand, through the propensity of older people to save rather than spend.

Despite these pan-European concerns policy recommendations at the EU level are necessarily limited, as demographic and migration policies are still the preserve of national governments in spite of some efforts to co-ordinate them. However the projects' conclusions stress that different levels of income and education are key push and pull factors in all migratory movements. Therefore, the broad proposition to EU development is to seek to reduce such regional and national differences and increase the symmetrical economic development of the whole EU27/29 area, and particularly to stem the flow of young persons from East to West and from the periphery to the core (which serves only to reinforce the existence of a single economic zone of global significance).

A project whose subject is inevitably a contested one, vis-à-vis the objectives of competitiveness and sustainability, is Project 1.2.1 'Transport services and networks'. The quality of transport infrastructures, in terms of capacity, connectivity, and travel speeds are shown to determine the competitive advantage of locations – this is often measured as potential accessibility. Such studies have indicated that there are two overlaying core-periphery patterns – a national and a European one. The national pattern reflects the fact that spatial interactions are more intense within than between countries. Thus, regions in the periphery of their respective national market centres suffer from increasing transport costs, as their interaction with markets is more dependent on transport than more central regions. If transport policies reinforce polycentricity at the European level, by connecting large urban centres, they may reinforce the dominance of capital cities. The implications of existing patterns and proposals for using new transportation options to strengthen polycentricity at different levels are ambiguous. The association between transport options and sustainability is more straightforward. Nonetheless, transport connectivity is essential for the movement of goods and cannot be substituted by the electronic exchange of information. Recommendations from this project focus on a modification

of existing transport forms and their use to reduce fuel consumption, and moves to multi-modal forms of transport, such as a the development of rail for dedicated freight passage.

Developments in the field of telecommunications (Project 1.2.2) are quite different from that of transport in the sense that networks have the potential to develop within areas that are not benefiting from physical connectivity to the European core. Hence, they are identified as key to the means by which the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies are to be realised. However, despite the potential for development across the EU, current strengths in telecommunication are found to reflect an existing urban bias and territorial divisions. The projects' findings indicate that leaving further developments to the market will exacerbate existing divisions. Thus intervention is necessary to increase territorial competitiveness by producing a broader polycentric base. As such, standardisation and subsidisation are required and the EU should participate in establishing better symmetry between public authorities and telecommunication providers. A note of caution is added though, for despite the vital role that ICT plays in the creation of GDP, scenario studies undertaken by the Project 1.2.2 team predict that there are clusters of areas that presently are not responding dynamically to ICT policies. A more positive trend though was identified around the idea of a polycentric form of territorial development of telecommunications where fibre optic operators are investing in cities outside the traditional European core.

Two final thematic projects whose conclusions are fundamental to Lisbon and Gothenburg are those focusing on «natural and technological hazards» (Project 1.3.1) and natural heritage (Project 1.3.2). The former, which relates mainly to risk management, shows that potential and real hazards (such as floods or forest fires) can affect both competitiveness and sustainability. Indeed recent disasters have entailed heavier environmental costs than any EU compensatory action could deal with. Here policy recommendations emphasise that prevention should be the primary objective. Secondly, containment or reduction of the impact where the first is not possible should be sought, and that such measures should be incorporated into Structural Fund assistance (as they already are for many Objective 1 assessments). In this policy area the goals of sustainability and competitiveness are compatible – the problem is getting member states to apply recommended guidelines.

The ESPON project on natural heritage has obvious significance for the sustainability agenda of the Gothenburg agreements, and in terms of «added value» (geographical diversity, high levels of ecological protection) to Lisbon. In addition, it is highlighted that where natural resources are over-exploited, ultimately money has to be spent to rehabilitate those areas. The project considers the potential for the Natura 2000 proposed network of high quality semi-natural environments to support sustainability and add to the attractiveness for locating activities outside the Core, thus the scheme may indirectly support «balanced development» away from the Pentagon. It recommends that Natura 2000 sites should be enhanced and other Europe-wide networks identified.

Territorial impact projects and their policy recommendations. – The results ⁽¹⁾ from this second phase of the ESPON programme provide considerable detail for policy analysis and review, but in so doing find several obstacles in seeking to accommodate the principles embodied in the Lisbon and Gothenburg agreements. This is particularly the case in the Project 2.1.1 which deals with 'TENs and transportation policy'. The project reaches the 'unavoidable conclusion' that '(you) can't expect a single design of transportation policy to be optimised to the pursuit of economic competitiveness, efficiency and the growth of the entire EU area (and simultaneously) provide environmental sustainability and a balanced spatial development'. The conclusion from 2.1.1 suggests that in view of current thinking in transport policy, the goals of the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas are going to be hard, in practice, to unite. Their assessment though (in the short, medium and long-term) favours the modal rebalancing and a reduction in fuel consumption.

A little more optimism about uniting these goals is implicit, surprisingly perhaps, in the findings of Project 2.1.4 which deals with the crucial and currently demanding issue of energy, though the conclusions and recommendations are by no means straightforward or easy in their application. As energy consumption is an indicator for sustainability, the relevance to sustainable development is obvious. While there have been improvements in diversification and moves from use of fossil fuel across the EU, alternatives have not been primarily renewable, and dependency on external imports and consumption remain high. The implications of this project suggest that if current levels of competitiveness are maintained in this way a major change is required. With regard to sustainable development the projects findings suggest that a much more significant commitment to renewable energy supplies and local energy sources is required than the limited move that has been initiated in this direction.

Another persistently problematic policy area; the Common Agricultural Policy was assessed together with Rural Development Policy in project 2.1.3. As the world's largest food trader, the EU has a strong interest in global competitiveness in the production of agricultural produce. At the same time agricultural methods, which maximise production can negatively impact on landscapes and habitats. The agri-environmental schemes proposed in Agenda 2000 and the establishment of the RDR (Rural Development Regulation) show a move to a focus on sustainability goals from the previous bias of the CAP35. The project team ran a series of policy scenarios assessing the likely outcome in competitiveness, cohesion and natural heritage of different options relating to the reform

(1) Projects 2.2.1, *Territorial effects of structural funds (2002-05)*; 2.2.2, *Territorial effects of the -aquis communautaire, pre-accession aid and PHARE/TACIS/MEDA programmes*; 2.2.3, *Territorial effects of structural funds in urban areas (2002-04)*; 2.3.1, *Application and effects of the ESDP in member states (2004-06)* and *Territorial trends in environment and impacts of EU Environment Policy (2005-06)* though very relevant to this paper are only to be completed this year and are not dealt with here.

of the CAP. The radical liberalisation of agricultural policy (elimination of price support, quotas etc.) was predicted to support competitiveness, by leading to more territorial specialisation, some intensive, commercial agri-businesses, and other areas turning to leisure and rural residential land use. However, this scenario is likely to undermine the objectives of sustainability, resulting in the loss of much natural heritage. The team recommend rather that the EU retain global competitiveness through a combination of quality and distinctiveness through maintaining its unique and varied pattern of rural resources.

Lastly, and most promisingly in terms of marrying Lisbon and Gothenburg, are the conclusions of the ESPON Project 2.1.2, examining the EU's Research and Development Policy and Innovation which, consistent with those of project 1.2.2 mentioned above, emphasise that R&D and associated innovations are unique in the sense that they may be seen as the answer to the desire for economic expansion without environment cost. They also do not depend on geographical connectivity or demographic concentration may be developed as a powerful tool for achieving a greater level of territorial equity. For this reason the identification of RDT in Lisbon-Gothenburg strategies as central to the success of the strategy is spot on for addressing the regional problems while enhancing regional characteristics of the European territory. However, precisely how to direct innovation policies and to address current territorial imbalances and improve the overall competitiveness of the EU needs further investigation, and worryingly the potential of the sector is, as the Project 1.2.2 team point out, limited to the partners involved in its implementation.

With regard to the fulfilment of the Lisbon objectives, the territorial perspective elaborated by this project, and reflected in other ESPON research, indicates that not all regions are potential «Lisbon areas». In other words, they cannot all rely on a knowledge based economy, given their diverse structural and historical paths. Consequently, some regions need to develop their economic base around other assets. Innovation capacity is shown to be variable across the EU. For example, it is greater in the North than in the South of the EU, and more prevalent in larger cities. Improvements in R&D performance will need targeted measures, for example building human capital and institutional learning through education. The «territorial roll-out» of the information society is not unproblematic and will depend on the establishment and acceptance of ICT infrastructure. Indeed, there are specific issues relating to the practicality of this in remote areas with low population density. Overall, the successful development of regions requires integrated packages of initiatives, and cooperation and coordination between sectors, policy areas at national and regional levels. In general though, enhancing European attractiveness would be supported if the European regions better exploited their diverse potentials.

With respect to the fulfilment of Gothenburg Objectives, there is similar degree of regional diversity, but here this appears to be more a reflection of variable levels of commitment to environmental sustainability. This fact, together with the perceptibly more minor attention paid to its goals, leads to the tentative conclusion that in the case of Gothenburg, as opposed to Lisbon,

a more regulatory top down approach may be an appropriate prerequisite to any comprehensive progress.

The review reflects the fact that previous ESPON projects have not considered sustainability and competitiveness concurrently, or their implications for each other. Indeed some project conclusions infer that they are incompatible. However, work in the ESPON 3.3 project is in the process of attempting to unite the concepts through the development of the notion of «competitiveness in sustainability» and the re-evaluation of policy sectors accordingly. The outcomes to date are presented in other papers in this Issue. In the remaining part of this paper, we outline briefly the application of the policy objectives to work developed by the 3.3 project team.

The application of policy objectives to Project 3.3. Determinant work developed by 3.3.— A key and innovative aspect of the 3.3 project has been the modification and adaptation of the work of Micheal Porter in order to determine measures for assessing the performance of European regions or territorial systems. This produced four main determinants, further characterised by several sub-components denoted as typologies. Policy recommendations derived from Lisbon, but applied to the each determinant and sub-category, have been developed according to both regional level (macro, meso or micro) and type of region ⁽²⁾. Here a summary of the recommendations for the primary categories – the determinants – of *innovation and research*, *global/local interaction*, *quality*, and *resources and funds* are charted for the Lisbon and Gothenburg Agendas.

Lisbon: *a) Innovation and Research.* The application of the Lisbon plans to this determinant at the EU level suggests that the European Investment Bank should take a leading role in promoting the networks required for innovation and research across the European Union. The issue of up-take is a priority which needs to be co-ordinated from that level, but devolved to agencies below in terms of its micro management. The proposed European innovation scoreboard would be introduced to most effect at the national/trans-national level, while it is at a regional level that «innovation poles» should be established. In terms of support, a «European Institute of Technology» could be set up at the EU level, but this and other European Technology Initiatives may be promoted by, and partnered with, industry and possibly higher education establishments.

b) Global/Local Interaction. With respect to this determinant, the co-ordination of the EU is required to ensure labour market requirements are met, with agreement on increasing the mobility of the workforce and migration. This

(2) In the published work of project 3.3 detailed recommendations for each determinant and typology are developed for each level of governance. The work is also presented in matrix summarised form for ease of access and includes reference to measures such as: «education delocalisation», measures for population mobility in borderline regions and «homogenisation of regional fiscal pressures» for Global local interaction at the regional level.

would be assisted by the establishment of a European Higher Education Area. The much contested reform of the European social model promoted by the Lisbon Agenda, basing support on work and alleviating tax pressures on labour, would be difficult to enforce at the EU level given past failed efforts to develop a genuine European social policy. Consequently the national scoreboard approach to improving labour participation rates and maximising productivity are probably the most attainable means of challenging perceived inefficiencies in the model. Meanwhile regional variations in work, tax and income maintenance configurations may offer alternative solutions to mitigating market inequities whilst retaining economic efficiency.

c) *Quality*. Addressing the issue of life chances is a key part of this determinant. However, here Lisbon objectives are less specific, allowing future innovation in policy development at all levels. Suggestions include innovation in eco-technologies harnessed to enhancing quality of life and renewing neighbourhoods and introducing labour policies which address the conflicts arising from maintaining a healthy work/home life balance.

d) *Resources and Funds*. In this determinant there is again an emphasis on labour market and income maintenance policies. Given the nation state command of these areas the Commissions' targets for the increasing work force participation rates – by at least 9% – with particular emphasis on women and older workers are appropriately devolved to the scoreboard approach as embodied in the National Plans recently submitted. More flexibility in labour market conditions with the extensions of freedom of movement may however help create the conditions for this. Measures may be enacted at both the national and the EU level to foster an encouraging environment for private research investment, R&D partnerships and high technology start-ups. These could be made more attractive by adjusting tax policies and providing the appropriate support in the form of venture capital with EIB backing. Finally at the macro level too, a reform of Structural Funds to focus on local employment delivery and economic growth, have been a controversial, but fundamental pillar of the Lisbon Agenda.

Gothenburg. The policy recommendations derived from Gothenburg and applied to the determinants of project 3.3 fall even less easily into appropriate levels of governance. As typical with issues of sustainability there are a lot more «oughts» and «shoulds» than specific recommendations and agreed responsibilities. Nonetheless the determinant *Innovation & Research* must by its very nature offer the most potential and the consensus here is that «a substantial investment is required in order to fulfil the Sustainable Development Strategy», though who should undertake the investment is unclear.

More concrete proposals are found in the area of *Global/Local Interaction* where it is advocated that EU co-ordination in four key policy areas must be worked towards; climate change, natural resources, transport and public health. To complement this pre-existent policy agreement on climate change must be implemented and the contribution of renewable energy sources must be increased proportionately. Prices, it is suggested, should be linked to their environ-

mental impact, especially in the field of transport. While these propositions would require interventions at the market and national level, EU action is essential to reform the Common Agriculture Policy which should demand more environmentally sustainable forms of production.

For the determinant *Quality*, specific EU wide measures are suggested; on public health (including a European surveillance and early warning system on health issues) and the initiation of action on the problems relating to rising levels of traffic should take the form of EU policy on a sustainable transport system which includes greater investment in public transport and other actions to encourage a major modal shift.

Perhaps most pertinent to the Gothenburg goals, is the *Resources and Funds* determinant. However, in relation to this determinant, Gothenburg only specifically suggests EU level action in the sector of fishing where it is proposed that the Common Fisheries Policy must address the issue of over-fishing more pro-actively. The implementation of the EU Integrated Product Policy is urged though, in co-operation with business. Other than that, recommendations that new measures are implemented to maintain bio-diversity and preserve ecosystems and reduce the levels of waste produced in the EU are articulated.

Whatever the shortcomings of its application, the Gothenburg commitment constitutes vital and symbolically significant step in leading the way in developing and promoting the environment agenda. It is for research, such as that conducted by this ESPON project, to develop regionally specific recommendations for action ⁽³⁾ and, as stressed in the Gothenburg strategy, the ultimate way of reconciling environmental sustainability and global competitiveness is to develop some way of separating economic growth from resource use.

Concluding Remarks. – Overall, the above review of ESPON Projects' policy recommendations suggests a need to move away from conventional trajectories for competitiveness if a concurrent goal of achieving sustainable development is to be met. The most notable required change with regard to policy options is a spatial repositioning away from an association of competitiveness with the capabilities of capital cities towards a broadening of the economic base and an explicit promotion of polycentricity. This is considered as not only providing economic benefits, but also promoting sustainability. If polycentricity is acceptable as an objective in the fulfilment of the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas, then research and development technologies (RDT) seem to be the most appropriate tool because innovations in this sphere do not depend on geographical connectivity. As such, with targeted intervention and investment, future RDT growth could positively affect the spatial structure of the EU territory by stimulating competition away from the Core.

(3) Please, refer to the Final Interim Report of ESPON project 3.3 for an elaboration of these.

In practice, achieving this «re-growth» in an effective way may mean moving away from a «remedial» approach to structural problems, towards concentrating on future «hubs with potential». Other policy aspects covered by the ESPON work prove more problematic for working simultaneously towards the goals of competitiveness and sustainability. Transportation is particularly challenging, the focus of conflict being related to fuel consumption. Here, compromises were found primarily in the desirability of modal shifts. Similarly with energy policy, diversification was promoted as the way forward. The issue of the changing demographic composition of the EU proved especially resistant to practical recommendations, particularly in terms of the realisation of the Lisbon agenda. This is an area that needs more exploration as regards the implications of current population projections on economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability and future spatial development. Implications which arise more broadly from all projects relate to the identification of regional variation, denoted by area type and geographical area, which affects the capacity to develop competitive potential. This aspect of work can feed most directly into future regional level policy recommendations.

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- PREZIOSO M. (ed.), *Territorial Dimension of Lisbon-Gothenburg Strategy*, ESPON 3.3 Project, Luxembourg, 2005.
- All following ESPON projects can be viewed on ESPON website: <http://www.espon.lu>

ESPON thematic projects reviewed

- 1.1.1: The role, specific situation and potentials of urban areas as nodes in a polycentric development
 - 1.1.2: Urban-Rural Relations in Europe
 - 1.1.3: Enlargement of the European Union and the wider European perspective as regards its polycentric spatial structure
 - 1.1.4: The spatial effects of demographic trends and migration
 - 1.2.1: Transport services and networks: territorial trends and basic supply of infrastructure for territorial cohesion
 - 1.2.2: Telecommunication services and networks: territorial trends and basic supply of infrastructure for territorial cohesion
 - 1.3.1: The spatial effects and management of natural and technological hazards in general and in relation to climate change
- ESPON territorial impact projects reviewed
- 2.1.1: Territorial impact of EU transport and ten policies
 - 2.1.2: Territorial impact of EU research and development policy
 - 2.1.3: The territorial impact of CAP and rural development policy
 - 2.1.4: Territorial trends of energy services and networks and territorial impact EU energy policy

SCENARI DI LISBONA-GÖTEBORG. UNA RASSEGNA DELLE RACCOMANDAZIONI DEL PROGRAMMA ESPON. – L'articolo ha lo scopo di fornire una sintesi della riflessione scientifico-politica alla base delle linee-guida che orienteranno l'effettiva distribuzione dei fondi strutturali nel periodo 2007-2013, allo scopo di riequilibrare le differenze regionali europee. L'approccio seguito per giungere alla messa a punto di un set di politiche utili all'applicazione della strategia di Lisbona/Gothenburg è coerente con l'impostazione che ha orientato la ricerca di una dimensione territoriale in relazione al concetto di capacità regionale di essere competitivi in sostenibilità. La metodologia ha permesso, attraverso la produzione di dati e di mappe, di correlare la misura delle capacità regionali alla scelta di appropriate policy di intervento anche sotto la forma matriciale più utile ad una gestione GIS. Le raccomandazioni politiche richiamate nell'articolo sono basate su risultati consolidati della ricerca e della politica europea e sono suscettibili di integrazioni, sulla base dei comportamenti/performance regionali in corso di definitiva valutazione per dettagliarne i contenuti operativi.

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