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ESPON
EUROPEAN SPATIAL PLANNING OBSERVATION NETWORK

ESPON project 2.3.1
Application and effects of the ESDP in the Member States

Co-financed by the European Community through the Interreg III ESPON Programme

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The partnership behind the ESPON programme consists of the EU Commission and the Member States of the EU25, plus Norway and Switzerland. Each partner is represented in the ESPON Monitoring Committee.

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

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Foreword

This second interim report (SIR) includes the preliminary results of the project, “Application and Effects of the ESDP in the Member States” within the ESPON Programme 2000-2006. The focus of the study is the application of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), which was adopted at the Potsdam informal Ministerial Council meeting in May 1999. More information about the ESPON programme and the project as a whole can be found on the ESPON website www.espon.lu

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The core team of the project included Nordregio, Catholic University Leuven, Research Institute for Housing, Urban and Mobility Studies (OTB), PhDB Consultant, Politecnico di Torino and University of Liverpool. EuroFutures and IRPUD supported the core team.

Nordregio was responsible for the editing of the Second Interim Report. In addition, Nordregio compiled Part 1 of the report in co-operation with Eurofutures.

In Part 2, Chapter 1 (ESDP application at the EU Level) was written by OTB Research Institute for Housing, Urban and Mobility Studies, together with PhDB Consultant.

Chapter 2 (ESDP application in the member states) was written by Nordregio and EuroFutures.

Chapter 3 (ESDP application highlighted by case studies) was written by University of Liverpool.

Chapter 4-6 (Preliminary Data & Indicators, Web based Questionnaire, and Policy Option Tables) was written by IRPUD.

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Part 1: Summary

1 Executive Summary: Key messages and findings

1.1 What impacts have 10 years of policy co-operation had?

The objective of ESPON 2.3.1 is to study the application of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP). The ESDP document was produced by an informal committee, the Committee of Spatial Development (CSD), which consisted of representatives of the EU Member States assisted by DG *Regio*. The CSD was guided by informal Ministerial Councils, with the ESDP finally being adopted at a Ministerial Council in Potsdam in May 1999. The informal nature of the CSD means that the document itself is of a voluntary character and that the individual Member States therefore may implement it according to their own wishes, timetables, and national agendas.

The questions to be addressed in this report relate to the impacts of the ESDP. How well known is it? In addition, what effects has it had on policy development within the European Commission, the 15 “old” Member States, the 10 “new” Member States, in the candidate countries of Bulgaria and Romania and on the neighbouring countries of Norway and Switzerland – i.e. within the ESPON space of 29 countries?

The ESDP lays down guidelines, aims and options for spatial development, but it is very general and therefore difficult to “apply”. The main contribution of the ESDP must therefore be assessed in terms of the dissemination of best practice in spatial planning and in highlighting European issues that are not usually at the forefront of national policies.

One observation that comes through at all geographical levels is that the dissemination of ideas is not a linear process. The ESDP itself mirrors the professional discourse in the countries most active in the drafting process. The influence it has had after publication depends in the main on the various circumstances pertaining in the policy fields, countries, and regions in question. When arguments taken from the ESDP are regarded as being useful, they are used, though this is often done without reference to the ESDP. The application of the ESDP is thus rather difficult to trace, as it is usually indirect and implicit rather than direct and explicit in nature.

This report is based on several different data sources: interviews with civil servants in the European Commission, national reports, a questionnaire answered by national experts and a number of case studies. It has proved challenging to collect data on the application of the ESDP, as knowledge of the document is often limited, while national debates can always be interpreted in different ways. This provides a challenge for our work as we

move towards the final report. For the final report we need to make a detailed analysis of the differences between the results provided by the various data sources while also assessing the impact of the differences between countries in respect of their involvement in the drafting process of the ESDP.

1.2 ESDP application at the EU level

At the European level, four areas of ESDP application are studied:

- Sectoral policies and programmes of the European Commission
- The INTERREG programmes
- The Tampere ESDP Action Programme
- CEMAT – the spatial planning co-operation of the European Council

1.2.1 Limited impact on sectoral policies and programmes of the European Commission

The ESDP identifies a number of ways in which policies can have a spatial dimension, such as, when

- sectoral policies influence some regions more than others (e.g. CAP, Urban initiative),
- specific areas are designated for assistance (Structural Funds) or protection (e.g. Habitat directive, *Natura 2000*),
- areas or corridors are identified for infrastructural improvement (e.g. Trans-European Networks),
- policies are regionally differentiated (e.g. innovation policy, state aid rules),
- multi-sectoral approaches are developed for categories of areas (e.g. INTERREG, LEADER+).

It has proved difficult to gain recognition for concepts with a spatial dimension while they are not included in EU treaties. Two of the EU policy documents referring to the ESDP, namely, the Sustainable Development Strategy and the White paper on Governance, were both published in 2001, i.e. shortly after the adoption of the ESDP.

It is however unlikely that the ESDP will feature in future policy documents, as the content of the ESDP is generally not familiar to desk officers in the European Commission outside DG *Regio*, and, as noted previously, non-binding documents are regarded as being of less importance generally. It should also be noted that other crosscutting issues, such as competitiveness or innovation, are linked to economic development and thus have more resonance with policy-makers.

1.2.2 INTERREG IIIB programmes are implementing ESDP ideas

We have assessed the degree of conformity between regional policy guidelines on the one hand and ESDP *themes* and *ways* on the other. The three ESDP *themes* are: polycentric development and a new urban-rural relationship, parity of access to infrastructure and service, and wise management of natural and cultural heritage. The ESDP *ways* are; vertical integration, horizontal integration and spatial integration.

The 1999 Structural Fund guidelines have a reference to the ESDP and do mention all three *themes*. The 2003 revision does however not refer to any of them. The ESDP *ways* are not explicitly mentioned, either in the 1999 guidelines or in the 2003 revision.

The INTERREG guidelines for the years 2000-2006 were published in 2000 and updated in 2004. These do make direct reference to the ESDP and particularly to Strand B, transnational co-operation, which is expected to take account of ESDP recommendations. The guidelines contain references to all ESDP *themes* and also to the *ways* where the need for more integrated approaches is highlighted.

The priorities of most INTERREG IIIB programmes are coherent with the ESDP. The programmes for the Atlantic, CADSES, and North Sea regions reflect the ESDP directly, while the programming priorities for e.g. Baltic Sea and Northern Periphery bear fewer similarities. The degree of coherence between the ESDP and the INTERREG IIIB programmes are considered in the mid-term evaluations of all programmes except three (Archimed, CADSES and North West Europe). Funding is provided in particular for projects concerning sustainable development and management of natural and cultural heritage, while less funding has been disbursed to projects concerning polycentric urban systems or urban-rural relationships.

The Draft Structural Fund guidelines for the 2007-2013 period were published in July 2005. This document do not mention polycentricity or urban-rural relationships, but it does refer to the need for more balanced development and the role of urban areas for issues such as growth and jobs, while topics concerning natural and cultural heritage are also mentioned. The issues of vertical, horizontal, and spatial integration are moreover touched upon in several places throughout the draft guidelines.

1.2.3 The Tampere ESDP Action Programme was soon forgotten

In October 1999, in Tampere, an ESDP Action Programme (TEAP) was agreed with 12 actions. The aim was to *"translate the policy aims for European spatial development into examples of good practise".* There has been a follow-up to most actions, but implementation did not in reality however meet with initial expectations. Tasks that were already under

implementation (such as for instance the establishment of the ESPON programme) and tasks that were well defined and which did not require a lot of co-operation between countries have been carried out to a greater extent than other tasks.

Indeed, from 2001 onwards, most actions went on without any reference to the TEAP. One explanation for this is the weakening of intergovernmental co-operation with less frequent Ministerial Councils; another is the downgraded status of the monitoring and coordinating body from 2001, when part of the missions of the Committee of Spatial Development (CSD) were transferred to the working group Sub-Committee on Spatial and Urban Development (SUD).

1.2.4 The CEMAT Guiding Principles are in accordance with the ESDP

The *Conférence européenne des Ministres responsables de l'Aménagement de territoire* (CEMAT) began its activity in 1970 as part of the Council of Europe. Until the start of the ESDP process in 1989, CEMAT was the prime platform for discussions of spatial planning issues at the European level.

Partly inspired by the ESDP process the CEMAT developed its own policy document, the *Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent.* The CEMAT Guiding Principles are then essentially a more concise and coherent version of the ESDP, whose terminology is adopted and whose principles are elaborated upon in order to address the European territory as a whole.

The ESDP primarily addresses the needs of the EU15 and thus was not regarded as pan-European by other countries. Hence CEMAT meetings and activities never refer to the ESDP. CEMAT activities were however intensified during the ESDP process until the recent enlargement of the EU. The ESDP is applied in CEMAT through the guiding principles, though this occurs in an indirect manner.

1.3 ESDP application at the national level

The degree to which the 29 ESPON countries have used the ESDP has been assessed by national experts on the basis of a series of questions regarding,

- planning traditions,
- application at different spatial levels and different policy sectors,
- the timing and importance of the different ways of application,
- differences over time and between regions.

1.3.1 Timing is more important than planning traditions

Studies of the spatial planning systems of the various European countries do sometimes make a distinction between different *planning perspectives* such as the North-Western, the British, the Nordic and the Mediterranean. One hypothesis was that the degree of application of the ESDP principles would correlate with the national planning traditions and that countries belonging to the different perspectives would share many of the same characteristics regarding ESDP uptake.

This has however proven *not* to be the case, as the issue of *timing* seems to be the more decisive factor. The ESDP was to some extent based on the planning policies in the countries that were leading the ESDP process (France, Germany, and the Netherlands), and would therefore naturally have a limited impact on those countries. The most visible tracks are found in countries where the national policies for spatial planning were reformed shortly after the ESDP was published. This is the case in Greece, where a new spatial planning system was developed in the period 1994-2000, and in Portugal and Spain, where new national plans were produced around 2000.

While the relevance of the ESDP faded soon after publication in the EU Member States, it has been used as a strategic tool in the integration process of new Member States. As such, ESDP principles have directly influenced new planning laws in countries such as the Czech Republic, Latvia, and Poland.

1.3.2 Application mainly within spatial planning at the national level

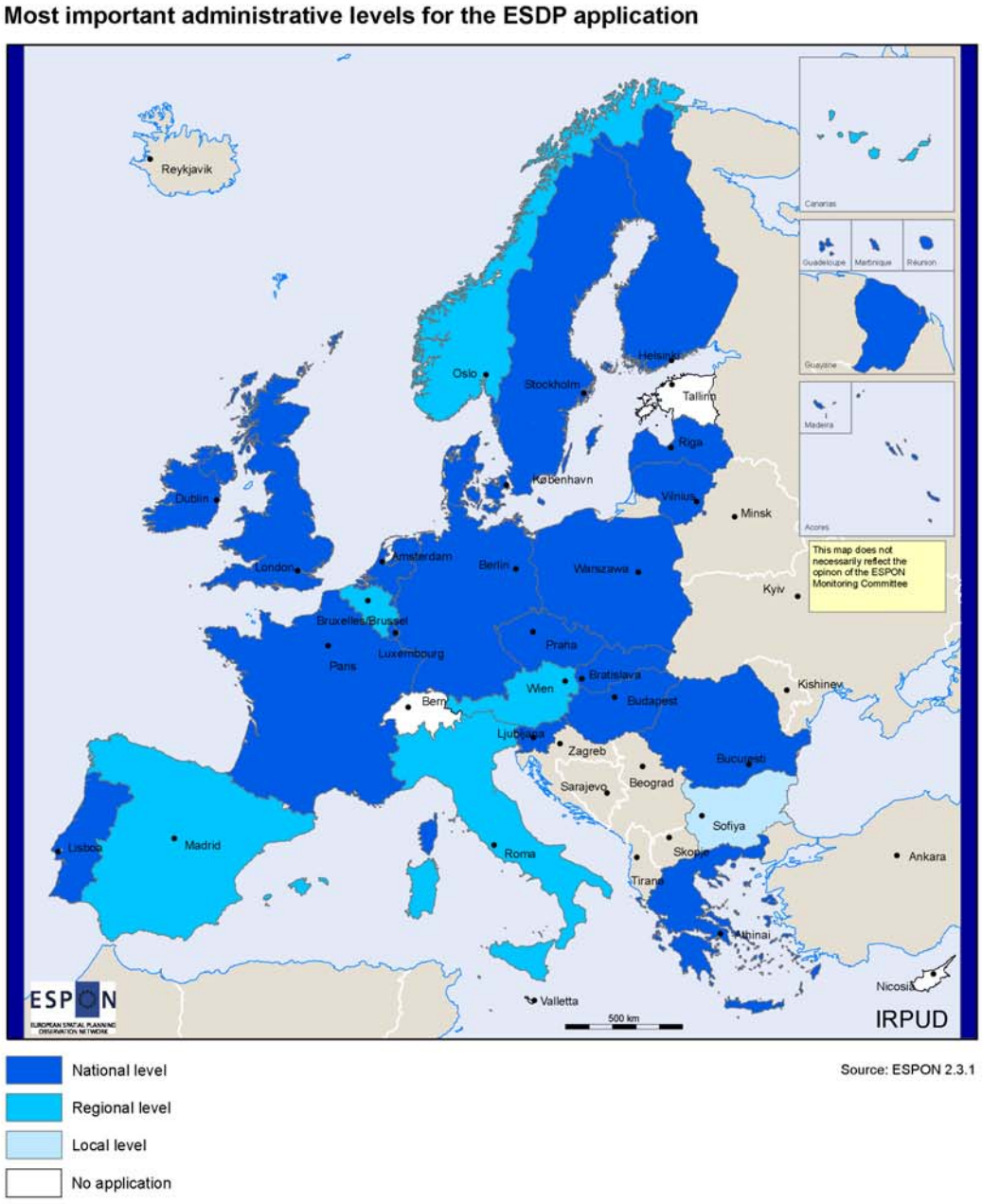
Four countries report that there is no ESDP application whatsoever: Cyprus, Estonia, Malta, and Switzerland.

For the vast majority of the remaining countries, the national level is where the ESDP has been used. Most countries have a national spatial planning framework with legislation or other regulatory support, and this is, naturally, a responsibility for the national level. The ESDP has been explicitly mentioned in policies at the national level in Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Slovenia, and the UK.

In countries where spatial development is the responsibility of strong regions, as in Austria, Belgium, Italy, and Spain, the regional level is where the ESDP has had most resonance. In the case of Norway, where the government did not have access to the ESDP drafting process, one of the regions was the first to look to the ESDP for inspiration and hence “imported” the perspective.

Map 1 illustrates which administrative level is, for individual countries, most important for ESDP application.

Map 1 Most important administrative levels for ESDP application



The ESDP is in most countries used within *spatial planning* only, at all geographical levels. Perhaps surprisingly, only one country (Hungary) identifies *regional development policy* as the most important sector for ESDP application, even if this sector has means and measures for policy implementation. This probably reflects the fact that spatial planning and regional policy are kept apart in most countries.

1.3.3 Changes in planning discourses is the main impact

The national experts were asked to determine in which fields the ideas of the ESDP were used first. In Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, and Slovenia the *planning discourse* was first affected, and as part of that there were changes in the *spatial representation*, i.e. images and maps showing the country's place in a wider Europe. The Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, and Spain meanwhile all report that the planning discourse was influenced first, though *planning policies* were influenced shortly thereafter.

There are also a few examples of ESDP influence on *institutional changes*, as in Hungary and Latvia, where a new set of planning institutions were established. Similarly also in Italy, where European ideas where part of the backdrop to the reformed constitution that saw the regional level strengthened, and in the Netherlands, where an International Affairs Unit was set up within the Directorate-General for Spatial Policy as a response to increasingly international discussion in this field.

In general, however, the impact of the ESDP is very limited in most countries. When asked to rank the importance of different categories of impact, the national experts did not rank *any* possible impact as important for about half of the countries.

1.3.4 Variations in time and between regions

For most countries the impact of the ESDP has been modest in terms of direct presence in planning documents. In general, the references to the ESDP were more numerous at the time of the first official deliveries in 1997 and 1999. Thereafter, interest seems to have dwindled in the old EU Member States, where planning documents produced after 2000 often lack direct ESDP references.

In contrast, the influence of the ESDP started to rise after its publication in many of the new Member States and in non-member countries. These countries did not take part in the drafting process but were subsequently influenced in respect of institutional reforms and changes in planning legislation.

The ESDP is generally known by a limited number of key people at the national level. Seminars and other dissemination activities are reported from some countries, and participants in INTERREEG IIIB projects will often have heard about it.

In general, therefore, it is difficult to talk about the application of the ESDP at the regional level, as it is more a question of conformity and parallel processes. There are regional variations in the degree of conformity between domestic spatial policies and the ESDP in some countries, depending on factors such as the position of the region within Europe, INTERREG participation and the attitudes of key individuals in the planning process. In Belgium for example, the use of ESDP ideas is more substantial in the Walloon region than in Flanders or Brussels. In Italy, the northern regions are more engaged in policy development than the southern regions with Emilia-Romagna playing a leading role.

The assessment of the national experts is that a good level of ESDP awareness exists at the national level in most countries, even if it is limited to a few people in many cases. The level of awareness is intermediate at the regional level, while in most countries the local level witnesses almost total ignorance of the ESDP. There are of course some exceptions to this. For example there is total ignorance of the ESDP at the national level in Belgium and Latvia, while the level of awareness is now assessed as intermediate in a number of the countries that were active in drafting the document, such as Denmark, France, Italy, the Netherlands and the UK for example.

1.4 Application of the ESDP's Policy Options

To further illustrate the penetration of ESDP ideas, we asked national experts to assess the degree of application of each of the 62 policy options presented in the ESDP. For this purpose, a web-based questionnaire was developed.

The general picture provided is that direct application of ESDP recommendations is very rare, but that policy developments in many countries often conform in some way to many of the ESDP's Policy Options.

This chapter will be further developed in our Final Report.

1.5 Examples of ESDP application

To illustrate how ESDP topics are understood throughout Europe, we studied 24 cases in more detail. These case studies are *examples* of planning practise: they are illustrative rather than representative.

Some general observations from these cases can be made regarding

- the *themes* they cover,

- the *ways* in which they work,
- the *means* used in terms of the application of ESDP principles,
- the *effects* of ESDP application,
- the kind of *actors* that take part in the projects.

1.5.1 Polycentricity is the most important ESDP theme

The ESDP policy *theme* that has captured the imagination of policy makers most is the idea of polycentricity. This is applied at a variety of spatial scales. One such case is that of Ireland, where three towns work together as a national gateway acting as a counterbalancing point for Dublin. Similarly, in Denmark, where eight co-operating municipalities in the "Triangle Area" have been recognised as a new national centre, and also in Italy, where local authorities in the North West Macro-Region aim at creating an integrated functional urban region. In the Italian case in particular the role of transport networks and corridors is highlighted as a driving force for regional competitiveness.

Many of the cross-border and transnational cases cover several ESDP themes. Projects are in many cases quite closely linked to the core of the ESDP and deal with issues such as balanced and polycentric urban systems, accessibility, and urban-rural relationships. In the Saar-Lor-Lux case a total and explicit coherence exists, as the project covers all of the policy aims of the ESDP.

1.5.2 Collaborative working and integration

Several different *ways* of working with the ESDP themes are illustrated through the cases. There are many examples of greater collaborative working, e.g. in Algarve where local mayors took part in the production of the new regional plan, and in Riga where the new Riga Regional Spatial Plan was developed in a more inclusive manner than before. It seems to have been easier to co-operate within the territory for which the plan was produced, while integration between levels of government has been more difficult.

Cross-border and transnational related issues are in many cases dealt with both through vertical integration and horizontal integration, as a large number of actors are often involved from different administrative levels as well as from different sectors.

Some examples are provided from regions that have worked through the strengthening or establishment of institutions and agencies at a higher spatial scale, through horizontal co-operation between local municipalities and counties.

1.5.3 Planning structures and cross-border projects

The case studies provide examples of different categories of *means* of application. In almost half of the cases the ESDP has contributed to shaping formal planning instruments and has had an influence on spatial plans or strategies.

Other examples illustrate cases where new informal planning structures have been established and new voluntary informal partnership arrangements created.

Seven of the case studies provide examples of spatial planning across national borders. The *means* are here the co-operative planning processes, often implemented with financial support from INTERREG and in some cases PHARE.

Two case studies provide examples where ESDP guidelines have been applied through institutional innovation. One is in Germany where a new agency (the CESD) was established for a time-limited period to address the issue of spatial planning in the context of the new EU treaty. The second is from Greece, where the Egnatia Odos Observatory was created in 2003 to monitor and evaluate the impacts of a new motorway.

1.5.4 Conformity rather than direct effects

The direct *effects* of the ESDP have been difficult to identify. The ideas of spatial planning embodied in the ESDP have been influential in shaping new or strengthening existing policy instruments, but only as one of several sources of inspiration. Some of the cases are older than the ESDP, and here development has been rather more 'in parallel with' than 'at the inspiration of' the ESDP.

There are institutional changes in several cases, but it is difficult to link these directly to ESDP application. The establishment of agencies and committees often have a long history and their motivations are in most cases to be found elsewhere. Nevertheless, the ESDP has in some cases undoubtedly been a source of inspiration, and has thus had an influence on planning discourses, policies, and practices. This is e.g. reported from the Øresund region, where the interregional focus in planning has also been reflected in an increasing use of images that illustrate the region in a wider spatial context.

The ESDP themes are part of current thinking about best practise. It has therefore been easy to find conformity between the cases and the ESDP recommendations, while the assessment of cause and effect is more difficult as the level of coherence in all cases is rather implicit.

The case from Hungary is the only one where a direct impact can be seen. Here emphasis is now given to protecting the natural and cultural heritage and to perceiving it as an asset for economic development.

1.5.5 The ESDP is not well known, but many are involved in projects

From the case studies one gets the impression that very few *actors* are aware of the ESDP, even if many of the ideas are common knowledge and people are working on a day-to-day basis with issues close to the core ESDP ideas. The use of the ESDP as an inspiration tool was in most cases confined to a small number of key people and often used as support and justification for certain actors' positions.

The cross-border and transnational cases are however somewhat different in this regard. A large number of actors were often involved, from central government, regional and local bodies, universities, and the business sector. These cases present a mixed picture in respect of ESDP application. On one level they are all in conformity with ESDP thinking as they take account of European aspects in planning and European funding has been vital for many of them. On the other hand, they have often been developed outside the framework of European spatial planning, and many of them illustrate conformity 'at a distance' with the ESDP rather than being direct applications *per se*.

1.6 Policy conclusions

1.6.1 Experiences from the first ESDP and ambitions for the next

The ESDP was developed during a 10-year process of intergovernmental co-operation, and does to a large extent mirror a number of prevailing aims and principles from the national and European planning discourse at that time. The main benefits were to highlight issues that are not normally to be found in the forefront of national policies - issues such as the international position of countries and regions and the new challenges for physical planning and regional development that follow from the ongoing globalisation of the economy and increased transport flows.

The most eye-catching ESDP-theme has been the idea of a balanced and polycentric development. Its attractiveness has probably something to do with the promising perspective of a concept that can stimulate economic growth and at the same time handle inequalities and polarisation.

As with many catchwords however, the issue of polycentricity becomes more difficult when we move from the theoretical to the practical level, though the results provided by the case studies do nevertheless provide positive inspiration.

With the enlarged EU and the ongoing polarisation between regions, the diversity within the EU is considerably larger now than it was at the time of the ESDP drafting. Since then, several new issues have emerged. One is the renewed focus on employment, innovation, and economic growth. Another is the fact that new Member States in Central Europe and new neighbouring countries in Eastern Europe has given the EU a new spatial reality. A third factor is the consequences of climate change for spatial planning, and a fourth is the challenges of migration and demographic changes. A new set of issues is emerging within the ESPON 3.2 scenario project, including the possibility of a significant increase in energy prices and, as a consequence of that, changes in regional accessibility and in the patterns of international trade. There are, therefore, a number of developments that may change the themes of a new ESDP process - or at least demand a reinterpretation of the existing ESDP guidelines, aims and options.

The ESDP recommended an increased horizontal and vertical integration between policy areas as the best ways for application of its ideas. This has, however, proved difficult. The tendency is still towards an increasing importance of sectoral governance. Changes in national planning systems have since 1999 often resulted in increasing horizontal integration at regional or local level while the vertical integration between national and regional levels is weakened at the same time. The next ESDP process should therefore continue its search for alternative ways of application of European spatial planning perspectives aiming to balance horizontal and vertical integration.

We have clearly seen applications of ESDP ideas, but in most cases these have been indirect, and generally without reference to the ESDP as a document. New ideas will, if they are attractive, tend to spread rapidly throughout professional networks. The main lesson for the future must then be that deliberate use should be made of existing networks as a means of disseminating ideas, while the ambition for the next round must be to disseminate these ideas within a broader set of networks than has hitherto been the case. Most importantly perhaps this should be attempted beyond the profession of spatial planning alone. The Structural Funds have been identified as the main economic means for ESDP application. Again the ambition must be to widen “spatial thinking” to a broader field of policies, e.g. to the CAP, Research Framework Programmes and Trans-European Networks.

It has been difficult to identify any significant tangible effects of the ESDP on the ground. This is not surprising, as the ESDP is rather general in nature and merely reflects the state of the professional debate at the time of its publication. Its effects are more visible in the new Member States, since they have recently undergone a period of institutional reform and

thus have had a larger than normal window of opportunity over the last few years in which to test and implement these new approaches. For the future, one should strive for more practical advice, easier to understand and easier for planners to make use of in their daily work. Impacts on the ground would be easier to achieve through pilot projects or other kinds of practical advice that inspire planners at all spatial levels.

We have seen that the ESDP is “a secret for the few”. It was developed by a limited number of actors, and the dissemination process that followed has seen limited success. The most successful dissemination has been via INTERREG (where funding for spatially-oriented projects is available) and via the concept of polycentricity. The ESDP was born out of a professional debate and has influenced this debate in a non-linear manner. This is likely how it will continue to work in future. The challenge for a next ESDP process must be to enlarge the circles that find the topic of pan-European spatial development relevant for their work. The ESPON programme has been instrumental in the enhancement of the level of academic co-operation on these issues. The next step must be to involve other policy fields as well.

There is still a need for a spatial development perspective and for a framework of EU sectoral policies – perhaps even more so now after the most recent and the probable future enlargements of the EU. The situation is now more heterogeneous with deeper differences between European regions, both from a socio-economic, governance and spatial point of view. The geography has changed and so have the challenges for Europe’s territorial development.

There is therefore a need for a renewed ESDP process at all three geographical levels: macro, meso, and micro.

1.6.2 Spatial planning at the European level is necessary

It has proved difficult to influence sectoral policies with spatial perspectives at the EU level. This does not come as a surprise, as the situation is the same within most countries. An institutionalisation of the policy area at the European level thus seems but a distant prospect.

One of the main outcomes of the ESDP process has been the ESPON programme. This programme has already produced significant new knowledge about the EU27+2+2 space, with more to come. The scientific platform for a discussion of the spatial situation, trends and challenges is far better now than it was when the ESDP process began more than 15 years ago.

A key factor for a future territorial policy at the European level is to keep the discussion on spatial developments alive. This can be achieved through a new ESDP process. The ambition must be to gain influence

through the process, not so much to produce a document – as we have seen in this study that the ESDP as a document has proved less influential than the new perspectives highlighted and the influence is has had on the professional discourse.

At the macro level, several different lines of action can be distinguished:

- *Stimulating the professional discourse.* This is a precondition if European perspectives are to be taken into consideration. The ESDP process, the ESPON programme, and INTERREG IIIB are examples of actions at the European level that add knowledge and develop new perspectives within the field of spatial planning.
- *A pan-European "ESDP 2".* A new spatial development perspective should go beyond the EU member countries. One possibility is to invite neighbouring countries to participate and to work together with the Council of Europe.
- *Visualising spatial perspectives in sectoral policies.* This would provide an increasing awareness of the spatial dimensions of EU policies, particularly in respect of enlargement and the new types of challenges brought by it and by globalisation more generally. A key for the future here then is likely to be the need to utilise this level of interest, helping sectoral DGs more easily visualise the interesting issues that a spatial perspective highlights, even for them.
- *Monitoring of spatial development.* The situation has improved considerably since the ESDP was published, as there is now far more data available on the spatial development of Europe. Indeed, monitoring the development, over time, of different categories of regions may now be possible. This will in turn help in the creation of more specific and empirically based policy development.
- *Funding of spatially focussed actions.* The current INTERREG III programme is the main economic source for regional co-operation across borders in Europe, and we have seen that these programmes are the ones who are most explicitly working with ESDP perspectives – often doing so within the context of widespread participation. Securing funding for relevant activities in this area will then also be a key future issue.
- *Securing a better formal platform.* Spatial perspectives will receive more attention if they are rooted in formal documents. Territorial cohesion is now included as a goal in the draft European Treaty. It is of obvious importance to have goals like this in the Treaty.

Although the first ESDP was an informal document, this was not clear for everyone throughout the process, and this may have hampered its usefulness. The status of a future new European informal spatial planning

document should therefore be clear from the outset and the implications of this status should be considered on beforehand.

The status of the ESDP as a "consensus document" has probably contributed to its sometimes vague and abstract content. Although there has to be a broad agreement on fundamental aims and objectives of a new ESDP, the answer to certain spatial development issues could be left open. The discussion among stakeholders would probably become livelier if the ambitions towards reaching consensus were reduced.

1.6.3 Highlight European issues in national planning

In this study we have identified a number of cases where ESDP planning principles have been adopted in national policies. This is more common among the new Member States that among those who originally took part in the ESDP process. Indirect application is the most common, i.e. where we can see that the ESDP and the professional European level debate influenced national discourse, legislation, or institutional changes, but without necessarily being directly referred to.

The most direct reference to the ESDP is found in transnational projects supported financially by the INTERREG IIIB programmes, as these are the only programmes where concepts from the ESDP policy guidelines are included in the regulations.

At the meso level – i.e. the national and the transnational level, a challenge remains to include these European perspectives into spatial development and planning:

- *Influence national planning systems.* European countries have different planning traditions, legislation, institutions, etc. Some countries do have a long track-record of national spatial planning; other counties do not have such planning instruments at all. This does of course have an impact on their awareness regarding trends and developments outside their own borders, which ultimately impact their own development. A new "ESDP 2" process would assist countries and regions to see themselves in a European context, their position, challenges, cross-border links, etc. It should highlight themes of relevance for the meso level, and the main avenue of influence would be through the ongoing professional debate and discourse.
- *Promote European territorial perspectives in sectoral co-operation.* In general, European societies are organised by strong sectors. The ESDP has only to a limited extent been able to communicate with sectors outside the spatial planning profession. In the future, the key to the production of more tangible effects will be to work with other sectors in the course of the process.

- *Include spatial perspectives in European programmes.* In the context of this report we have noticed that the territorial dimension is often poorly developed in the Structural Funds Objective 1 and Objective 2 programmes. It would therefore have a significant influence on national policies if spatial perspectives were included in the guidelines for these programmes.

1.6.4 Develop practical examples as an inspiration for regional spatial planning

In the context of the case studies we have seen a long list of projects and policy initiatives forwarded as being in line with ESDP recommendations. More specifically however in most cases this has actually reflected conformity with the ESDP rather than its explicit application, while the document itself remains unknown to many, particularly, local level practitioners.

This is representative of a pattern that we can probably expect continue in future: The main influence of a European perspective would be implicit and indirect through the ongoing professional discourse.

Our study has illustrated the challenges of interpretation: even general goals like those in the ESDP will be understood differently and have different meanings for people, depending on professional traditions, regional and local challenges, etc.

At the micro level, an “ESDP 2” will have to be more practical to be influential:

- *Develop examples and pilot projects that can be of inspiration to others.* It is not easy to go from general goals and principles at a pan-European level to practical application in a regional or local context. The gap could be narrowed if more practical examples were developed.
- Encourage benchmarking. One instrument for increased attention would be to undertake benchmarking exercises in respect of spatial development. This is already done to a certain extent by the OECD, but can be further developed. An important tool here will be to define the necessary indicators for the description of a territory’s situation.

Analysis: Scientific summary covering the main concepts and methodologies

This study of ESDP application mainly assesses the effects and impacts that the ESDP has had on policies and policy documents in the Member States (at the national and regional levels) as well as in trans-national co-operation and in the EU policy context. These types of effects and impacts are labelled “application”. Application is understood here as “making a rule take effect” or “policy aims and concepts put into practical use or operation”.

The assessment of the effects and impacts of the ESDP on policies (i.e. its application), focuses on the degree to which the philosophy, policy guidelines, aims and options have affected, or been incorporated in, other policy documents, programmes and plans. Furthermore, changes in institutional settings or in a particular division of responsibilities can also be seen to constitute ‘impacts’ (of the ESDP) in this sense.

The national and regional situation (policies, plans, programmes, institutional settings) both before and after the introduction of the ESDP has been investigated. The work undertaken on the application of certain ESDP features through certain policies and processes will allow us to identify whether the journey of single ESDP issues into national and regional documents has been through a form of *direct* or *indirect* application (e.g. through discursive integration or through a process of the progressive change and innovation in local planning practices). In certain countries, the ESDP document is literally taken as a “Terms of Reference”, thus clearly influencing policy-making, while in others, the ESDP influences policy debates and discourses without actually being mentioned in the policy documents. In both cases, however we can attest that the ESDP has been ‘applied’.

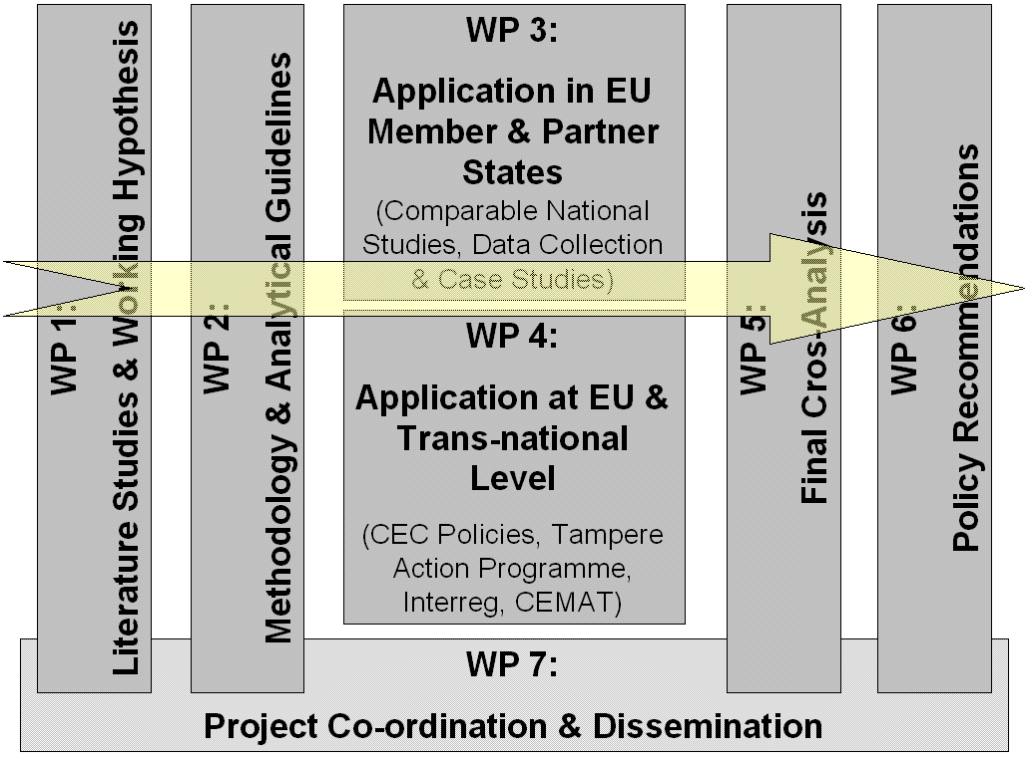
In chapter 4, dealing with quantitative data and indicators, the concept of conformity versus non-conformity with specific aims and options promoted by the ESDP has been used. Here it is only the degree of conformity that is analysed, not the causality behind, or the direct or indirect way in which such conformity has occurred, that has been questioned.

2 Analysis: Scientific summary covering the main concepts and methodologies

2.1 Structure of the project

The project has been organised into work packages (WP) covering different steps of the work process (see Figure 1). The work packages have been performed in sequence, with the exception of WP 7, which was undertaken at the end of the project. The results of the work performed within WP 1 and 2 are to be found in the First Interim Report. This Second Interim Report mainly includes the outcome of the work performed within WP 3 and WP 4, and to some extent that of WP 5 and WP 6 also. The Final Report will consist of the results of all work packages.

Figure 1 Working structure of the project ESPON 2.3.1



2.2 Working hypotheses

In the first interim report, working hypotheses were formulated. A review of the policy documents and of the scientific literature was used in order to clarify a number of concepts and methodological aspects, which relate in particular to an initial definition of:

- the decisive factors relevant to a more polycentric European territory,

- the direct and indirect effects of EU policies, including elaborations on ‘soft’ and ‘hard’-law, and
- the instruments and institutional settings required to improve vertical and horizontal co-ordination and integration in the field of spatial policies.

Based on these aspects, a number of working hypothesis were subsequently formulated e.g.

- Polycentricity is the ESDP theme that has had the most resonance and has captured the most attention in respect of European planners
- Some relation between the experienced types of ESDP application and the four different European regional spatial planning perspectives should be expected
- The ESDP has helped to promote the vertical and horizontal integration of the existing strategic planning instruments.
- Changes in spatial planning in some countries are consistent with the ESDP, but are not necessarily the result of it.
- INTERREG funding has contributed to the development of concrete examples of the application of the ESDP in practice
- The ESDP has contributed to an emerging ‘spatial’ planning agenda particularly in states where there has traditionally been a strong sectoral orientation in respect of policymaking
- The impact of the ESDP as a policy document may be diminishing over time

2.3 Analysis approach

In the First Interim Report the methodological analysis approach was based on a number of key terms/words. The key terms are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Key words/terms used in the analysis

Themes	a1. polycentric spatial development (polycentrism) a2. new urban-rural relationship a3. parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge a4. wise management of the natural and cultural heritage
Ways	b1. vertical integration b2. horizontal integration b3. spatial integration
Means	c1. cross-border co-operation (Interreg IIIA) c2. transnational co-operation (Interreg IIIB) c3. urban governance c4. Structural Funds
Effects	d1. institutional changes d2. changes in planning policies, practices or culture (discourses) d5. changes in spatial representation (images)
Levels / Scales	e0. European / transnational / cross-border e1. national e2. regional e3. local
Actors	f1. European Commission f2. other European institutions f3. Member States / national authorities f4. regional and local authorities f5. other actors (academic sector, private sector, etc)

Four different studies have been carried out and the preliminary results are presented in this second interim report. The four studies are an EU-level study, a national study based on 29 national reports, a case study based on 24 cases and a web- based questionnaire study.

The four studies were undertaken separately, and are presented as such, while the cross cutting analyses will be carried out during the next months and presented in the final report. In the four studies a number of different methodologies and data sources have been used and analysed separately. Therefore it is not always possible to compare results concerning individual countries directly from one study to another.

2.3.1 EU-level study

The ESDP was drafted as a policy framework for European Member States, their regions and local authorities and the European Commission. The EU-level study focuses on the application of the ESDP at the highest of these levels: the pan-European scale. It is structured around four main areas of application:

1. *The Tampere ESDP Action Programme (TEAP)* is examined. The material is mainly based on a review of relevant documents, including the assessment carried out for the Belgian presidency of the EU in 2001. It is also based on the results of a number of interviews with officials and experts from the Member States.

2. *The Community INTERREG Initiative*. The application of the ESDP in the INTERREG III Initiative (2000-2006) is examined. It mainly draws on a review of programming documents from the European Commission and from the different programming areas, focusing in the main on the INTERREG IIIB Programme. Additional material is used as well as interviews with a number of people who were involved in drafting, approving and implementing the Programmes.
3. *Sectoral policies and programmes of the European Commission*. The ESDP refers to a number of 'territorially significant' EU sectoral policies. These are examined in some detail here. The material is mainly based on interviews with officials from the commission and a review of European policy documents.
4. *CEMAT – The European Council of Ministers responsible for Regional and Spatial Planning*. CEMAT brings together representatives of the 46 members of the Council of Europe in order to pursue the common objective of a sustainable spatial development of the European continent. The material here draws on a literature review and interviews with key actors in the CEMAT process.

2.3.2 National reports

In the interests of consistency (in terms of the research approaches used in the overall project), guidelines for the national reports and case studies were developed and circulated to the TPG members. The guidelines also tried to ensure that the questions raised by the working hypotheses were addressed. Therefore the guidelines were mainly based on the matrix presented above.

The guidelines aimed at identifying the main differences concerning the application and effects of the ESDP throughout the ESPON space. The assumption being that ESDP application is largely framed and dominated by the national policy systems, both in terms of policies and their focus and institutional settings relating to the vertical and horizontal division of labour and responsibilities. The country study mainly focused on investigating:

- the administrative level of ESDP application
- the main policy sector(s) in which the application is taking place
- the degree and focus of application, i.e. which ESDP aims and concepts are used

In all, 29 country reports were performed. Each national report consists of a comparable national study and an indicator collection. The research methods in the main consisted of analyses of spatial planning policy documents and interviews with key experts.

2.3.3 Case studies

The case studies are intended to act as illustrative examples of how the ESDP has been applied in practice through a variety of different mechanisms. The specific case studies were chosen to explore a variety of types of ESDP application and were approved by the national representatives in the ESPON programming committee. To this extent then it is important to emphasis that they are *illustrative* rather than *representative* of application within the Member States, and indeed should not be seen as being the best or indeed the only evidence of application with or indeed between Member States.

In this second interim report, we explore these common and sometimes divergent themes of application according to the actual means of application. While each case study is unique and tells an interesting story in its own right, the purpose of this report is to provide an initial synthesis of the findings. In so doing, the case studies themselves will not be described in detail. In order to do this in a logical and structured way we have subdivided the case studies according to the means of application. In total, 24 case studies were undertaken covering a variety of means of application.

An overview of the case studies can be found in Part 2, chapter 3.

In order to collect comparative information in the national reports and the case studies certain guidelines were constructed and used. The preliminary structure of the guidelines was presented in the First Interim Report. During the period April-May 2005 they were further developed, and are attached in annexes 2 and 3.

The project collected numeric data for the national reports and the case studies. This data is based on simple scores. The nature of this data has however raised some difficult methodological problems, mainly due to the fact that it is based on a low frequency of valid answers. These scores are preliminarily analysed separately in part 2 chapters 4 and 6 of this report, but will be elaborated further during the next working period.

2.3.4 Web- based questionnaire

In addition to the construction of the country report and case study, a web -based questionnaire was also undertaken. For each country, 9 experts, 3 of whom were from the national level, 3 from the regional level, and 3 from the local level, were identified. Their role was to fill in a web-based questionnaire concerning the application of ESDP in their country. The questionnaire was a separate investigation within the project, while the main objective was to develop indicators.

At the time of drafting this second interim report, 107 experts out of 218 had submitted their questionnaires. Initial results on basis of 91 returns

are presented in part 2 chapter 5. The fact that these results are preliminary and that the data analysis has still to be completed must however be emphasised here.

2.4 ESDP Bibliography

In order to be able to develop a database consisting of a bibliography of scientific articles, papers and reports about the ESDP, partners and sub-contractors were asked to deliver lists of references in connection with the First Interim report.

In this Second Interim Report additional references used in the national reports and case studies have been added to the list and developed into a more flexible database (see Annex 1).

In the database the references have been commented on and assessed.

2.5 Development of Policy Recommendations

This issue was addressed in the national reports and in the case studies. The development of the policy recommendations was based on the ESPON structure, using the macro, meso, and micro level approach. In addition, a differential short-term, medium-term and long-term approach has also been used. This report however only includes the first draft of the policy recommendations. The next step will be to further develop them. This will be done by interviewing and discussing the recommendations with stakeholders. In addition, a one-day workshop will be organised with the core team in April 2006 in order to discuss and develop the policy recommendations further.

3 Reflections on the comments made in respect of the First Interim Report

In the following section, reflections on the comments delivered by the ESPON Coordination Unit on the First Interim Report are provided.

In this Second Interim Report, we have tried to meet the request to address the content, main findings, results, and policy recommendations in the executive summary. A short paragraph addressing the status of the ESDP has also been included in the executive summary. In addition, a list of abbreviations has also been incorporated.

The Second Interim Report also includes the first draft of a complete "ESDP bibliography" including a short assessment of each provided title. (See annex 1)

In the response there was a request to include European mapping of the findings and results. The first steps towards this request have been undertaken in this report, mainly in Part 1 and Part 2, chapters 2 and 4. Given the already noted problems with the data however, the number of maps included here is limited, though this number will of course be supplemented in the final report.

Concerning the request for further elaboration of the chapter about OECD, the TPG would like to stress that the description of the "OECD 2001 Report on Territorial Outlook" was something extra not asked for in the Terms of Reference.

Regarding the comments on Tampere ESDP Action Programme (TEAP) it should be pointed out that the description of the programme in the First Interim Report was simply meant to be a short introduction. In this Second Interim Report all actions are given a "status description", that is to say, each action and the results and effects of that action are addressed.

Investigating INTERREG II A, B and C (1997-2000) is important. This has been done in the EU-level study in Part 2, chapter 1, and to some extent in the national reports contained in Part 2, chapter 2, as well as in the case studies, in Part 2, chapter 3.

In the comments on the First Interim Report, we were asked to provide further information on the status of the development of the national reports. During the summer, the national reports and the case studies were undertaken using common guidelines and headings. These reports and case studies have now been analysed and the preliminary results of these analyses are presented in this report. The plan is to publish each national report and case study in connection with the delivery of the Final

Report May 2006, either in an annex to that report or as a downloadable file available from the ESPON official homepage.

4 Compliance with the *Addendum*

Mainly in Part 2 of the Second Interim Report we will try to meet the formal requirements stated in the Terms of Reference and *Addendum*.

i) Presentation of a comprehensive working report on the tentative results of the research undertaken; applying the methodology, and the analysis of the accumulated data/information previously collected, including the following elements;

Draft final analysis/diagnosis of the accumulated data/information of the application of the ESDP at the EU, transnational, national (for each country from the ESPON area), and regional/local levels

Tentative assessment of the spatial and territorial impact at the EU, transnational, national, and regional/local levels and in different territorial contexts

Presentation of findings in the case studies including preliminary conclusions based on a cross analysis of the case studies

Preliminary recommendations on the thematic relevance and delivery mechanisms of the ESDP, and on how to improve the report in terms of the application of spatial objectives, concepts, and policy orientations. This should also include recommendations for the practical application of the ESDP guidelines in the different operational programmes of the Structural funds, at the European, transnational, national and regional/local levels (Mainly done in Part 1 and Part 2, Chapter 2)

Draft recommendations for improvements in policy orientations and options in respect of the ESDP, covering the enlarged European territory, and in relation to a territorial dimension in EU strategies, such as Lisbon/Gothenburg, and the aim of territorial cohesion proposed in the Third Cohesion Report (outdated / but still valid ESDP policy options and suggestions for new policy options in relation to an enlarged EU territory) (Part 1)

j) First input, based on indicators and typologies, developed for the ESPON database and map collection (Part 2, Chapter 4 to 6), including a final draft database for the ESDP bibliography (Annex 1)

5 Networking undertaken in respect of other ESPON projects and application of the ESPON scientific platform

The core team is involved in the overall implementation of the project. These core team members have been responsible for developing the theoretical and methodological frameworks for the national reports and case studies, comprehensive findings and the preliminary policy recommendations.

The project has tried to closely co-ordinate its work with the other research projects and transnational project groups (TPGs) within the ESPON programme. This has been done in order to be able to cross-reference and share knowledge and data as it emerges. In particular, we have closely coordinated our work with the ESPON 2.3.2 project "Governance of territorial and urban policies from EU to local level". In this respect for instance, we have tried to the coordinate the selection of case studies. If the same case study is chosen, different aspects and issues have been covered by the two projects, in the hope that the studies will complement each other. Thus, there has also been some collaboration on the development of the guidelines for both the country studies and the case studies. The analysis of both the national reports and case studies were however performed using two different frameworks.

The project will also use the results of the thematic projects produced within the ESPON programme Strand I, i.e. 1.1.1 Polycentric development, 1.1.2 Rural-urban partnership, 1.2.1 Transportation etc, while the results from Strand II are also likely to prove useful in this respect.

The project has undertaken its work in line with the common ESPON scientific platform. For instance, the lead partner participates in the lead partner meetings organised by the ESPON Coordination Unit. In addition, the project seeks to actively use the different ESPON Guidance papers in its work.

6 Further research issues and data gaps to overcome

As noted previously, this report includes only the preliminary results of the project. The next step is to further develop the comprehensive and policy recommendation findings. In addition, the final report will be compiled. The challenge remains however to develop a set of relevant indicators and typologies able to deal with the qualitative aspects required in a study of ESDP application.

Part 2: Analyses

1 ESDP application at the EU Level

1.1 Introduction

The ESDP was drafted as a policy framework for European Member States, their regions and local authorities and the European Commission. This part of the Second Interim Report focuses on the application of the ESDP at the highest of these levels: the pan-European scale.[2] It is structured around four main areas of application:

5. *The Tampere ESDP Action Programme (TEAP)*. At the 1999 meeting in Tampere the then EU Member States agreed to an ESDP Action Programme. In this programme a number of Member States and the Commission committed themselves to carrying out a number of ESDP related tasks. The TEAP is the third area of application examined in this section of the report. The material is mainly based on a review of relevant documents, including the assessment carried out for the Belgian presidency of the EU in 2001. It is also based on the results of a number of interviews with officials and experts from the Member States.
6. *The Community INTERREG Initiative*. The ESDP considers INTERREG to be one of the main instruments for applying the ESDP. The application of the ESDP in the INTERREG III Initiative (2000-2006) is examined. It mainly draws on a review of programming documents from the European Commission and from the different programming areas, focusing mainly on the INTERREG IIIB Programme. Additional material is drawn from the mid-term evaluations of the INTERREG III programmes as well as from interviews with a number of people who were involved in drafting, approving and implementing one or more of the Programmes.
7. *Sectoral policies and programmes of the European Commission*. The ESDP refers to a number of 'territorially significant' EU sectoral policies. These are examined in some detail here. The material is mainly based on interviews with officials from the commission and a review of European policy documents. The work also draws upon various ESPON policy impact projects (e.g. Project 2.1.1 – Transport Policy impact, Project 2.1.3 – CAP impact, Project 2.1.4 – Energy, Project 2.1.5 – Fisheries, Project 2.2.1 –Structural Funds impact)
8. *CEMAT – The European Council of Ministers responsible for Regional and Spatial Planning*. CEMAT brings together representatives of the 46

[2] Subsequent sections of this Second Interim Report focus on the application of the ESDP at the national and regional scales.

members of the Council of Europe in order to pursue the common objective of a sustainable spatial development of the European continent. CEMAT has provided a key platform for the discussion of spatial planning issues at the European level. It has also produced a number of key planning documents, which have guided spatial planning policies, including the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent. The extent to which the activities and publications of CEMAT have applied the ESDP is the fourth area of focus in this section. The material here draws on a literature review and interviews with key actors in the CEMAT process.

1.2 The Tampere ESDP Action Programme

1.2.1 Introduction

At the same informal ministerial Council in Potsdam in May 1999 where the ESDP was adopted, its application was also discussed. In October 1999, in Tampere, the ESDP Action Programme designed to carry out 12 actions was agreed. This subsequently became known as the Tampere ESDP Action Programme (TEAP). The aim was to '*translate the policy aims for European spatial development into examples of good practice at transnational and European level as well as at national, regional and local level*'. The objective was to *'demonstrate concrete and visible ways of applying and supporting the policy orientations laid down for the European territory*'.[3] The idea was thus to show how to apply the ESDP, while at the same time giving a consistent multi-annual work programme for cooperation inside the CSD after its main task of preparing the ESDP had been completed. The ESDP Action Programme built on a series of initiatives proposed and selected by the Member States together with the Commission. Twelve actions were chosen falling under three strands (see Annexes 1 and 3):

1. Promoting a spatial dimension in Community and national policies
2. Improving knowledge, research and information on territorial development
3. Preparing for an enlarged territory of the European Union

The TEAP contains actions that differ considerably in terms of contents, involved actors, and outputs (see Annex 2). Most selected actions have some direct links with the ESDP text (see Annex 3). The TEAP puts the actions into a common perspective, which is ESDP specific. What is

[3] ESDP Action Programme, Final version 22 September 1999, p2.

common to all actions in the TEAP is the accent on the process dimension, which is expected to strengthen co-operation.[4] The TEAP document states:

'*Each of the proposed initiatives needs a close co-operation and the support of authorities responsible at different levels for the territories concerned. In dealing with the Action Programme, Member States and the Commission have to involve regional and local authorities in order to obtain practical results in a number of joint projects*.'

'*In the spirit of European co-operation, Member States interested shall be involved as project partners. Following the integrated approach behind the ESDP, each Member State is obliged to involve relevant national sector policies and relevant regional and local authorities. Interested partners from the academic world, NGOs and the private sector can participate where relevant*.'

'*The responsibility to co-ordinate and monitor the ESDP Action Programme will be taken jointly by Member States and the Commission. In practice, the CSD would be the proper body for this task. Member States will in common provide the resources necessary for the co-ordination and monitoring*.'

The Committee on Spatial Development (CSD) was given a significant role in coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the TEAP: lead partners of each action were required to present a progress report on each project to the CSD twice a year. The programme relied on the 'lead partner' principle in which the lead partner for each action has '*the responsibility for the management of the project*' and provides '*the resources needed for managing the project in collaboration with the other participants*'. For some important and extensive actions, all Member States were expected to act, with one country taking responsibility for a particular aspect or managing it. In the absence of any top-down coordination, the programme relied upon the goodwill of the actors involved.

When the TEAP was adopted in 1999, a mid-term agenda was defined up to mid-2003, although it was recognised at the time that '*a certain flexibility and room for adjustments in the timing will be indispensable*'. This mid-term agenda would seem to indicate that completion of the programme was expected well beyond 2003, though interpretations diverge on this point: the 'expert document' of the Sub-Committee of Spatial and Urban Development working group (2003) for example states that the '*Tampere political action programme for the ESDP will be completed in 2003*'.

[4] This echoes the ESDP itself (§162): '*application is not the responsibility of one authority but of a wide range of spatial development (land-use, regional planning, urban planning) and sectoral planning authorities*'.

In the First Interim Report of ESPON project 2.3.1, the twelve actions of the TEAP were assessed in terms of the 'themes', 'ways', 'means', 'effects', 'levels / scales' and 'actors' of the European Spatial Development Perspective (also used in the review of policy literature in the First Interim Report).[5] The main focus of this report is on the outcomes of the TEAP, particularly since 2001 (see below).

A valuable source of information for the review of the progress made in each action is the report made in mid-2001 for the Belgian Presidency. The information in this progress report was largely based on the minutes of the CSD meetings. The focus is on the outcomes of the TEAP in the period following this mid-term review (i.e. after mid-2001). Because the CSD, which was in charge of monitoring the TEAP, was *de facto* abolished in 2001, the findings in this report are not based on minutes of meetings but on other sources of information, notably provided by the people responsible for implementing the actions.[6] This includes members of the delegations to the CSD and a working group inside the CDCR, the 'Sub-Committee of Spatial and Urban Development' (SUD).[7] ESPON 2.3.1 national reports as well as various additional documents (such as deliveries of the actions) were also studied.

1.2.2 Outcomes of the TEAP Process

TEAP Action 1.1: ESDP policy orientations in Structural Funds mainstream programmes

This action has some overlaps with action 1.3, which addresses the issue of the application of the ESDP in national and regional planning (see below). Therefore, the action as well as our assessment is focused on the ways in which the Member States take the ESDP into account while building Structural Funds Programmes. All Member States were lead partners for this action. Portugal took on a coordinating and synthesising role. The 2001 mid-term assessment by the Belgian Presidency shows that the Portuguese had drawn up an outline for the action but the implementation had been halted awaiting the results of a similar study for the European Commission.[8] The Commission study examined whether the

[5] The assessment in terms of the 'themes', 'ways', 'means', 'effects', 'levels / scales' and 'actors' can also be found in Annex 4.

[6] A list of the persons interviewed can be found in Annex 5.

[7] The Spatial and Urban Development Working Group (SUD WG) of the Committee on the Development and Conversion of the Regions (CDCR) was created by the CDCR in May 2001, in accordance with the desire of the European Commission to discuss spatial and urban issues inside the CDCR.

[8] The European Commission study was carried out in the first half of 2001 by the University of Strathclyde and Nordregio, and resulted in two reports: one on 'The Spatial and Urban Dimensions in the 2000-06 Objective 1 Overview' (Polverari et al.,

Policy Guidelines and Aims of the ESDP had been integrated into the 2000-06 Structural Funds programmes for Objective 1 and 2 Regions and how this had taken place. Explicit reference was made to the ESDP Action Programme in the terms of reference for this European Commission study. Obviously, this implied a strong overlap with the envisaged action 1.1. Moreover, the Portuguese Delegation thought it was also a very ambitious action given the short time for executing it and the complexity of setting it up. In addition, the idea of creating ESPON was already in development. There was some concern however that there would be a significant overlap in aims, while concern was also raised over the simultaneous financing of the ESPON programme and the Tampere ESDP Action Programme and in particular whether this could lead to the situation that limited resources would be allocated to the latter as the focus shifted more towards ESPON. In the end, this action was not carried out. According to the ESPON 2.3.1 national reports that mention TEAP action 1.1, the EC's guidelines did not result in an explicit reference to the ESDP orientations into Structural Fund programmes, though the programmes are nevertheless often in line with the ESDP's contents.[9]

TEAP Action 1.2: INTERREG III and ESDP demonstration projects

Denmark had a coordinating and synthesising role in respect of this action. By the time of the mid-term assessment by the Belgian Presidency (2001) it was already clear that the time schedule for the evaluation of INTERREG IIIB projects, as well as demonstration projects, could not be achieved as intended given the delayed schedule for the approval of the guidelines for the INTERREG IIIB programmes. Instead, the Danish delegation proposed to analyse the integration between transport, environment, and the Structural Funds in the INTERREG IIC transport projects and in the INTERREG IIIB programmes. When a new Head of Office took over in the Ministry responsible for the implementation of this action, it was decided to change the action in such a way that it would fit with the agenda for the coming Danish presidency. Thus, action 1.2 turned into a predominantly Danish endeavour. Although the initially foreseen high level seminar did not take place, a large conference was organised in 2002 instead. The theme of the conference was 'European Cities in a Global Era – Urban identities and Regional Development'. The action also resulted in three documents:

1. European Cities in a Global Era - Urban identities and Regional Development. Ministry of Environment, report for debate.

2001) and one on 'The Spatial and Urban Dimensions in the 2000-06 Objective 2 Programmes' (Rooney et al., 2001).

[9] Structural Funds as means of applying the ESDP are also considered in chapter 2.

2. Copenhagen Charter 2002, A statement on the occasion of the Danish presidency, Ministry of the Environment, Copenhagen, 2002
3. 'European Cities in a Global Era – Urban identities and Regional Development – messages and conclusions', Follow-up report to the conference, Ministry of the Environment, Copenhagen, 2003.

Although the impact of the conference and these documents is hard to measure, the Danish consider it quite successful. In summary, action 1.2 as formulated in the Tampere ESDP Action Programme was only partly carried out because the timetable did not allow for it after the delay in approving the guidelines for INTERREG IIIB. Instead, the Danish formulated a new action based on a national agenda.

According to the ESPON 2.3.1 national reports that mention action 1.2, although preparation of the INTERREG IIIB Operational Programmes did reflect the ESDP, the idea of ESDP demonstration projects was not really implemented. On the other hand, the Greek report mentions the ESTIA (INTERREG IIC) and ESTIA-SPOSE (INTERREG IIIB) projects as good examples of the voluntary integration of the ESDP's aims into INTERREG projects.

TEAP Action 1.3: ESDP policy orientations in national spatial planning

In charge of the synthesis report, Belgium launched its part of the action early in 2001 by circulating a questionnaire and an accompanying note within the CSD. The questions related to the issues of the Member States' awareness and application of the ESDP at different levels and by different actors, and took the form of a self-assessment rather than of an evaluation from the outside. Participants were asked to underline encountered problems and to provide examples of successful or less successful experiences. A draft report compiling the answers was prepared by a university research centre, in the hope that it would serve as a basis for further analysis and discussion in the CSD. The modification of the role of the CSD on the eve of the Belgian presidency cut the process short.

Three years later, as many issues discussed in the report still seemed relevant, notably with the new challenges faced by the Union and its Member States, the report was reviewed by the Walloon spatial planning administration and made available for the SUD Working Group in June 2004. The synthesis report was presented and briefly discussed in the SUD Working Group meeting of September 2004.

A number of ESPON 2.3.1 national reports indicate that the Member States have integrated the ESDP into their policies even where there is no explicit reference to it, and even though sometimes the process was difficult (e.g. problems linked to horizontal co-ordination were mentioned

in relation to Greece). As the issue of application in the Member States is one of the main topics of the 2.3.1 project, more detail on this matter can be found in what follows.

TEAP Action 1.4: Spatial impacts of Community Policies.

The fates of the different components of this action were not similar. A report on the spatial impacts of sectoral policies at the Community level was indeed written in 2001 (often referred to as the 'Robert report'[10]). The 'Robert report' does not explicitly refer to the TEAP, although it does contain interesting information about the relationship between 3 major Community polices (Common Agricultural Policy, Common Transport Policy, Common Environmental Policy) and the objectives and options of the ESDP. The case studies included in the report can be viewed in terms of a contribution on the Member States' experiences.

On the other hand, the part of the action concerning transport policy and the ESDP was not carried out. The TEN orientations do not refer explicitly to the ESDP and the high-level event was not organised during the Portuguese Presidency as foreseen.[11] The Portuguese 2.3.1 national report indicates that "*the problem was related to a lack of consensus concerning the authorities responsible for transport in the member-states/Commission - authorities that, as far as the Portuguese understood, were not willing to fully cooperate in working towards the objectives of the project. Having failed to reach a participatory consensus the project ended up not being taken forward*".

TEAP Action 1.5: Territorial impact assessment

The UK took the lead on this action. Various meetings and workshops were held between 1999 and 2000 and a report was produced in 2000. A 'Territorial impact assessment' workshop was organised in Louvain-la-Neuve in October 2001 under the umbrella of the Belgian Presidency. Later on, the ESPON programme focused on the territorial impact assessment of policies in the policy impact projects (Strand 2 projects).

The 2.3.1 national report on the United Kingdom, who were also the Lead Partner of this action, states that: "*there is little recognition within the ODPM whether there is any further interest or indeed momentum for this particular form of assessment*."

TEAP Action 1.6: Urban policy application and co-operation

[10] Robert, J.; Stumm, T.; Vet, J.M. de; Reincke, C.J.; Hollanders, M.; Figueiredo, M.A. (2001). *Spatial impacts of community policies and costs of non-coordination. Study for DGXVI (Regional Policy)*. Agence Européenne Territoires et Synergies, Strasbourg.

[11] There was however a reflection about polycentrism and transport during the French Presidency (2000/2), but no dedicated event.

At the political level, the Conference of ministers in charge of urban policy decided to implement the multi-annual programme adopted by the CSD in Lille in November 2000. Later presidencies were also active in the area. Sweden held a seminar in Norrköping in May 2001, Belgium hosted an informal meeting of European urban policy ministers in Brussels in October 2001. Denmark held its Conference in Copenhagen in November 2002 (see also TEAP action 1.2), while the Netherlands hosted the informal council of ministers in charge of urban policy (Rotterdam, November 2004), which decided to strengthen the implementation of the Lille programme. The Rotterdam council was also the occasion to launch the European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN).

Co-operation at the administrative level first took place inside the Urban Development Group (UDG).[12] In late 2000, the Commission estimated that urban issues should be discussed inside the CDCR, and decided to end its participation and financial aid to the UDG. This can be seen as a first step in the process of integrating spatial and urban issues within the framework of regional policy. The UDG nevertheless decided to continue its work. Since mid-2001, urban issues have also been discussed in the SUD WG of the CDCR, with some dedicated meetings.

TEAP Action 2.1: Establishing the ESPON co-operation

The joint application of all EU15 Member States' to INTERREG co-financing for the ESPON 2006 programme, with Luxembourg as lead partner, was submitted to the Commission in July 2001 and approved in June 2002. The ESPON 2006 Community Initiative Programme was subsequently revised in order to take into account new Member States and a new version was approved in December 2004. The political and administrative authorities of Luxembourg have assumed the role of Management Authority and Payment Authority for the Programme. The Co-ordination Unit is based in Esch-sur-Alzette and partially financed by the government of Luxembourg. Some 30 projects have been, or are currently being carried out within the ESPON framework, with more than 280 partners.

TEAP Action 2.2: Geography manuals for secondary schools

France, the lead partner for this action, published a geography textbook for secondary schools in 2000 under the title *'L'Europe et ses Etats: Une géographie'* ('Europe and its states: a geography'). Ten professors from different parts of Europe authored the book. It was launched on the occasion of the Conference of Lille, organised by the French Presidency in early November 2000. English and German translations were published in 2001.

[12] The Urban Development Group (UDG) started off as a sub-group of the Committee for Spatial Development (CSD), initiated at the Tampere Council in 1999.

TEAP Action 2.3: 'Future regions of Europe' award

According to the German national report for Project 2.3.1, the competition has been organised but not in the framework originally agreed. According to the report, the 'future regions of Europe award' currently remains a somewhat mystical creature. Germany initiated a *Regionen der Zukunft* competition in 1997 that emphasised the ideas of the Local *Agenda 21* and the first round successors (26 regions) formed a network of regions. The general idea of the future regions competition, which stood behind the TEAP 2.3 project was finally realised in the form of the European Awards for Regional Innovation, organised in the framework of the Innovative Actions co-financed by FEDER.

Another strand to the TEAP Action 2.3 was via the link to INTERREG and the Baltic Plus cooperation. Under the umbrella of an initiative entitled 'Europe's Regions on their Way to Sustainable Development', 73 pan-European regions participate and exchange perspectives, concepts, and strategies towards sustainable development.

TEAP Action 2.4: Guide on integrated strategies for coastal regions

The integrated management of coastal zones has given rise to initiatives that preceded by several years the adoption of the TEAP, such as the 'demonstration programme on integrated management of coastal zones' (ICZM) of the European Commission (DGs Environment, Fishery and Regional policy) launched in 1996, which oversaw 35 demonstration projects.

In its contribution to the TEAP progress report presented in Namur, the Spanish delegation indicated that the completion of the document was forecast for late 2001 because of delays for various operational reasons. After consultation and debate notably inside the CSD and the holding of a seminar, the definitive elaboration of the European Recommendation Guide would then be carried out.

The Spanish national report for Project 2.3.1 states that: "*The only information we have is that a meeting was held bringing together representatives from the Mediterranean Spanish autonomous regions (held in Valencia) in 2002 and published in a book entitled: 'Modelos territoriales sostenibles en espacios litorales meditarráneos' ('Sustainable territorial patterns in Mediterranean coastal spaces'*)." During the Spanish Presidency in 2002, a European High Level Forum on ICZM was organised in Alicante (Spain). In 2002, the EU Parliament and Council adopted a recommendation concerning the implementation of ICZM in Europe.

The Greek national report for Project 2.3.1 indicates that Greece "*had a decisive role together with Spain (Lead Partner) in action 2.4 - Guide on integrated strategies for coastal regions. When Spain stepped back,*

Greece took the initiative to elaborate further the directive that was presented during the Greek presidency (2003)." In June 2003, the ICZM workgroup endorsed a guidance report for ICZM national stocktakes (presented by the 2002 recommendation as a basis for ICZM strategies).

TEAP Action 3.1: Pan- European framework for spatial development

Germany committed itself to lead this action concerned with developing an agenda for strengthening political and technical co-operation with accession countries and neighbouring non-Member States. CEMAT, the European Council of Ministers responsible for Regional and Spatial Planning, was the main platform for this action. CEMAT's pan-European spatial development vision, entitled 'Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent', was adopted as a basis for future cooperation in the field of spatial planning between EU Member States and accession countries as well as neighbouring countries, under the German chairmanship. The policy guidelines of the ESDP were incorporated in the CEMAT Guiding Principles (see section 1.5 below for more discussion of this process). Thus, German effort to apply the CEMAT Guiding Principles could be considered as instrumental in fulfilling their commitment to action 3.1 of the ESDP Action Programme. Thus, although little reference was made to the Tampere ESDP Action Programme since 2001, Germany has been quite strongly involved in actions to further develop political and technical co-operation with the accession countries and neighbouring non-member states under the umbrella of CEMAT.

Little reference is however made to the Tampere ESDP Action Programme when it comes to involving accession and neighbouring countries in the ESDP. This is because these countries feel more connected to the CEMAT Guiding Principles than to the ESDP. However, as there are many similarities in terms of development principles in both documents, it can be concluded that significant effort in the spirit of action 3.1 has been undertaken.

TEAP Action 3.2: Spatial impacts of enlargement on EU Member States and non-Member States

Little is known about this action, except what has been indicated by the Commission in its contribution to the Namur progress, namely that the second report on economic and social cohesion presents the results of studies conducted by, and on behalf of, the Commission about the impact of enlargement on the Member States and on neighbouring countries.

1.2.3 National perceptions of the TEAP Process

According to the national reports prepared for ESPON 2.3.1, a variety of Member State opinions exist concerning the TEAP process (Table 2). Opinions differ among the Member States, and sometimes also *within* member states (e.g. Sweden). It is therefore quite difficult to identify the precise reasons for this diversity of opinion. Even among the lead partners, no unanimity exists. The TEAP has however remained rather inconspicuous in many Member States and did not involve many people. Hence, as underlined by the national report for the United Kingdom, once these people are no longer in charge, the process loses its dynamism and continuity. Most new Member States indicated that they were not involved in the preparation and adoption of the TEAP.

Table 2 National perceptions of the TEAP Process

Country	Quotations from the national report
Austria	No comment on TEAP
Belgium	According to the Belgian answer to the TEAP questionnaire, the TEAP is considered as a useful tool in the ESDP process.
Denmark	No global comment on TEAP as a whole
Finland	The TEAP was developed during Finland's EU presidency. It was also a Finnish initiative. As Finland was the host, it did not receive any particular commitment in terms of the implementation. The main outcomes of ESDP in Finland materialise through ESPON and INTERREG. (HP.) Little knowledge has been made available about the TEAP, while the reports made by other countries could have been better circulated (KP). The impact of the TEAP has been mainly symbolic, while the main outcome has been an increase in the general level of awareness (IM).
Germany	Germany had a specific responsibility for two elements of the TEAP [...] Overall, Tampere seems no longer to be 'present' in the actual discussions.
Greece	All of the TEAP actions have been applied in Greece as clearly documented in the interviews. [...] Greece has not undertaken specific commitments within the TEAP process. However, as it was made clear in the interviews, it had a decisive role together with Spain (LP) in action 2.4
France	No comment on TEAP as a whole
Ireland	Ireland had only limited engagement with the Tampere TEAP process.
Italy	No comment on TEAP as a whole
Luxembourg	No comment on TEAP as a whole
The Netherlands	As regards the Tampere ESDP Action Programme, no evidence has been found that stakeholders other than the International Affairs Unit of the National Spatial Planning Agency have had a part in it.
Portugal	In Portugal, the overall assessment of the impact of the TEAP is negative. The information gathered suggests that initially the TEAP was indeed agreed upon and there seems to have been some consensus about it and a willingness to carry it out. However, the Portuguese officers perceived it as a very ambitious programme for such a short execution time. At the same time, the Commission's positioning was changing with the end of the CSD and the outlining of the objectives concerning the Working Group on Spatial and Urban Development.

Country	Quotations from the national report
Spain	The very low level of interest, on the specific issue of coastal area management is due to the particular situation of urbanisation in the Mediterranean countries. After the Tampere meeting, rather difficult commitments were developed; an example of this being the response of the Spanish central government to the ESPON 2000-2006 Programme. In fact, when we asked the Spanish Ministry of Environment about the Tampere Programme, we did not receive an answer, probably because there is none available. The main question to be underlined here is the absence of the application of the Tampere Programme from the national government level, partly because of non- legal competences in spatial planning.
Sweden	The CSD ceased to exist during the Swedish presidency in 2001. The capability to monitor the Tampere process disappeared with that. The Swedish opinion is that the action plan has been managed well by the Member States, even if the tasks have been performed in different ways. Most of the countries have fulfilled the tasks. However, representatives from the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning and one from the Ministry of Industry and Trade are of the opinion that the Government has not worked actively with the tasks and no country has fulfilled all its tasks, instead most countries have chosen to apply only some of them.
United Kingdom	It is also interesting to note that many of the key civil servants who were initially engaged in the ESDP process and the Tampere Action Plan have now moved onto new duties with new tasks and responsibilities, while limited institutional memory remains concerning what is actually required to satisfy the requirements of the Tampere Action Plan.

1.2.4 Summary

Implementation of the TEAP does not quite fit with initial expectations. In general, two key issues appear to be conducive to effective implementation of TEAP actions. Firstly, tasks that are well-defined (in terms of content and outputs) and which do not require a lot of co-operation between different actors have been implemented to a greater extent than other tasks; this applies notably to evaluations made by the Commission and to actions such as 1.5 (TIA) or 2.2 (the geography handbook). Secondly, actions already begun before agreement of the TEAP and where the complex co-operation process has had time to become established have been implemented to a greater extent than other tasks: the most prominent example here is the establishment of the ESPON Programme, but this applies also to co-operation in matters of urban policy.

The difference between the individual outputs and the implementation process of the TEAP must be distinguished. Most outputs were delivered though, in a number of cases, not in the expected way. This may concern schedule (e.g. action 1.3), actors, (e.g. 2.4) or the form of the output (e.g. 1.1 or 2.3). Differences may occur for various reasons. In some cases, there was no agreement about how to proceed, or conditions had changed (e.g. other priorities or new initiatives taken by the Commission).

In other cases, there was also an unexpected problem in terms of a lack of resources, legal constraints (e.g. financing the 'Future regions of Europe' award) or of externally caused delays in essential decisions (e.g. 1.2).

In terms of the co-operation process, the assessment is mitigated. At the outset, it was clearly implied that all partners were willing to work in line with the ESDP philosophy. This continued over time for some actions while in other cases, such as those where only one partner carried out the action, or where an output was not followed by further initiatives (e.g. 1.2 and 3.1), the co-operation dimension was not clearly enhanced. From 2001 onwards, most actions went on without an explicit link with the TEAP or even without the partners being aware that this was so. This explains the difficulty in collecting information on the achievements reached, as well as the poor visibility of the TEAP.

The varying degrees of success of the actions were already apparent from the Belgian Presidency's progress report of 2001. Although the progress report only covers half of the period concerned by the mid-term agenda, it already emphasises some of the difficulties encountered in relation to a number of the actions, notably actions that would have required particular co-ordination and partnership between Member States and those with the Commission. Looking back, we can say that most problems encountered in relation to implementation had already appeared in the preceding period.

Part of the explanation for the difficulties encountered in implementing the TEAP can be found in process-aspects and in significant modifications of context. Both are related as the character of the process (informal, innovative, relying on voluntary commitment) making it quite sensitive to the political and organisational context. Within the space of less than two years, the institutional context for the TEAP was however transformed, with a variety of significant changes having taken place, such as:

- the nomination of a new Commission in 1999
- the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) and the treaty of Nice in 2000
- the Lisbon agenda
- increasing focus on the challenge of enlargement and its potential effects in the matter of Structural Funds, raising expectations about the Second cohesion report to be presented by the Commission
- apparent weakening of intergovernmental political co-operation in the matter of spatial planning: no informal ministerial Council is organised between Tampere (October 1999) and Namur (July 2001).

This evolving context has had very significant consequences for the TEAP, most notably the loss of its monitoring and co-ordinating organ, the CSD, in 2001. Its role was shared among the new SUD workgroup of the CDCR, the ESPON Monitoring Committee and the short-lived CSD+ (Committee on Spatial Development extended with delegations from the then-accession countries).

Given these significant changes in context, the actual results of the TEAP are not easy to assess. In particular the emergence of a new political agenda and new concepts pushed the TEAP into the background. Many Member States were actively working on actions more or less directly linked to the TEAP but they often did so without referring to the TEAP.

1.3 The INTERREG Initiative

1.3.1 Introduction

The European Union launched the INTERREG Community Initiative in 1990 in order to support the regions on the inner and outer borders of the Union and to help them cope with the difficulties arising from their territorial situation. The first INTERREG Community Initiative, INTERREG I (1990 to 1993), was devised as the European Community's response to the implications of the Single Market. It recognized the relatively disadvantaged situation of border regions throughout the European Community and proposed a two-pronged mechanism of support for such areas. INTERREG provided support for economic development in less developed border regions and, given the limiting factors to such development engendered by borders, set such development within a cross-border focus. The stated aims of the INTERREG I Initiative were:

to assist internal border areas of the Community in overcoming the special development problems arising from their relative isolation within national economies and within the Community as a whole in the interests of the local population and in a manner compatible with the protection of the environment

to promote the creation and development of networks of co-operation across internal borders and, where relevant, the linking of these networks to wider Community networks, in the context of the completion of the internal market of 1992

The main objective of the INTERREG I Initiative was the promotion of cross-border co-operation: between regions directly neighbouring each other. It had a budget of €1 billion and its priorities included tourism, human resource development, environmental protection, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, and regional development. The REGEN Initiative, also launched in 1990, aimed to fill in some of the missing links in the

trans-European networks for transport and energy distribution in the Objective 1 regions.

The INTERREG Initiative was continued from 1994 to 1999 as INTERREG II, and combined the functions of the INTERREG I and REGEN Initiatives. INTERREG II had a total budget allocation of €3.5 billion (1996 prices) and comprised three strands: (i) cross-border co-operation (Strand A, €2.6 billion); (ii) trans-national energy networks (Strand B, €0.5 billion); and, post-1997, (iii) trans-national co-operation in the sphere of area development to tackle flooding and drought problems and to develop spatial planning for large groupings of geographical areas (Strand C, €0.4 billion). The objectives of the INTERREG II Initiative were similar to INTERREG I although INTERREG II contained increased emphasis on cross-border co-operation. The introduction of the IIC strand was primarily a reaction to flooding problems in 1995 along the Rhine and Meuse rivers in Belgium, Germany, and The Netherlands, and was contained in a package deal that also included financial support for dealing with drought in the Iberian Peninsula. The IIC strand focussing on transnational co-operation was very much in line with the agreements of the informal meetings of EU-ministers responsible for spatial planning in Liège (1993) and Leipzig (1994) that both proved to be crucial for the making of the ESDP (Faludi and Waterhout, 2002).

The third and current INTERREG Initiative (INTERREG III) covers the period between 2000 and 2006 and has a budget of more than €5 billion (2002 prices). The objective of INTERREG III is to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the Community by promoting cross-border, transnational and interregional co-operation and the balanced development of the Community territory. Special emphasis is placed on integrating remote regions and those that share borders with the new Member States. INTERREG III has three strands: IIIA, IIIB and IIIC.

Strand IIIA is concerned with cross-border cooperation between adjacent regions. This strand aims to develop cross-border social and economic centres through common development strategies. According to the European Commission, this strand is the most important part of the INTERREG Initiative because of its ‘essential integrating role for the Union and the future Member States’ (CEC, 2002:p8). It is administered through 64 programming areas lying along the Union’s internal and external land borders (and certain coastal areas), including a number along the borders of the new EU Member States (see Annex 6). Strand IIIB is the follow-up of IIC in the previous programming period and is concerned with transnational cooperation, and aims to promote better integration within the Union through the formation of large groups of European regions and supports actions involving national, regional, and local authorities. Special attention is given to the outermost parts of the EU and island regions.

There are 13 programming areas for Strand IIIB (see Annex 7). Strand IIIC, administered through four programming areas (see Annex 8), focuses on interregional cooperation, and aims to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies and instruments through large-scale information exchange and the sharing of experience mainly by means of networks.

Of the three strands of INTERREG III, Strand B (transnational cooperation) is most closely related to the aims of the ESDP. According to the 2000 Communication from the European Commission laying down the guidelines for INTERREG III, transnational cooperation (Strand B) proposals should '*build on the experience of INTERREG II C and take account of Community policy priorities such as TENs and of the recommendations for territorial development of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)*' (European Commission, 2000). The coherence between INTERREG and the ESDP is further examined later in this chapter. The next section reviews all INTERREG programming documents and assesses their consistency with the ESDP. This is then followed by a closer examination of INTERREG III Strand B and the consistency between individual INTERREG IIIB programmes and the ESDP.

1.3.2 Review of INTERREG programming documents

This section contains a text analysis of INTERREG programming documents to assess, in general terms, their correspondence with the 'themes' and 'ways' of the European Spatial Development Perspective (also used in the review of policy literature in WP1 of ESPON project 2.3.1). These key terms are summarised in Table 3 below. The EU programming documents analysed in this document comprise the 1999 Communication concerning guidelines for Structural Funds and their coordination with the Cohesion Fund,[13] the 2003 supplement to this document (containing revised indicative guidelines),[14] the 2000 Communication on INTERREG III,[15] the updated version of this

[13] European Commission (1999). Communication from the Commission. The Structural Funds and their Coordination with the Cohesion Fund. Guidelines for Programmes in the Period 2000-06. COM (1999) 344 final. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

[14] European Commission (2003). Communication from the Commission. The Structural Funds and their Coordination with the Cohesion Fund. Revised Indicative Guidelines. COM (2003) 499 final. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

[15] European Commission (2000). Communication from the Commission to the Member States of 28 April 2000 laying down guidelines for a Community initiative concerning trans-European cooperation intended to encourage harmonious and balanced development of the European territory. INTERREG III. COM (2000) 1101 final. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

Communication from 2004[16] and the recent 2005 Communication on Cohesion Policy 2007-2013.[17]

Table 3 'Themes' and 'ways' used to assess INTERREG programming documents

Themes	a1. polycentric spatial development (polycentrism) a2. new urban-rural relationship a3. parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge a4. wise management of the natural and cultural heritage
Ways	b1. vertical integration b2. horizontal integration b3. spatial integration

1.3.2.1 The Structural Funds and their Coordination with the Cohesion Fund: Guidelines for 2000-06 (1999 and 2003)

These Guidelines were published in July 1999, just a few months after the publication of the ESDP, with the aim of helping '*national and regional authorities to prepare their programming strategies for Objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Structural Funds and their links with the Cohesion Fund*' (European Commission, 1999:1). The guidelines are structured around three strategic priorities: (i) regional competitiveness; (ii) social cohesion and employment; and (iii) the development of urban and rural areas. They are illustrated with a number of examples of good practice from the previous programmes (1994-99). The document is divided into three parts:

1. conditions for growth and employment
2. the European Employment strategy
3. urban and rural development and the contribution to balanced territorial development

The document makes explicit mention of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), stating (on page 29):

"*The Member States have prepared a draft informal document containing indicative guidelines on the long-term development of the European territory (European Spatial Development Perspective). In this context, assistance from the Structural Funds to reduce disparities between the core and peripheral regions must be continued in view of the increased*

[16] European Commission (2004). Communication from the Commission to the Member States of 2 September 2004 laying down guidelines for a Community initiative concerning trans-European cooperation intended to encourage harmonious and balanced development of the European territory. INTERREG III. (2004/C 226/02). Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

[17] European Commission (2005). Communication from the Commission. Cohesion Policy in Support of Growth and Jobs: Community Strategic Guidelines, 2007-2013. COM (2005) 0299. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

concentration of activity in part of the Union as well as in certain metropolitan areas. The development strategy of each region must also take account of the indicative guidelines in order to include them in a broader overall view, not just of the country in question but the Union as a whole."

Revised indicative guidelines were published in 2003 whose objective was to offer Member States a '*complementary set of guidelines which will facilitate the identification of coherent and balanced priorities for the development of measures*'. In general, the 1999 guidelines remained valid after the publication of the revised indicative guidelines in 2003: the revised guidelines were intended to be complementary and reflect some of the major changes to have occurred in EU policies with potential impacts on the programming of the Structural Funds. The concept of regional cohesion is explicitly mentioned in the 2003 revised guidelines.

The 1999 document contains some reference to all three of the ESDP's policy guidelines (polycentric development and a new rural-urban partnership, parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge, and wise management of the natural and cultural heritage). The 2003 revised guidelines, on the other hand, contain no explicit reference to any of these themes.

While the concept of polycentric development is not explicitly contained in the 1999 document, the need for multi-centred (i.e. polycentric) and more balanced territorial development is mentioned (European Commission, 1999:32). The issue of urban-rural relationships feature in the document as a section in Part 3 of the document ('Synergies between urban and rural areas: a balanced development'). Part 3 of the document (Urban and rural development and their contribution to balanced territorial development) states that it is necessary to '*encourage an integrated process aimed at favouring a synergy of urban and rural development in order to make progress towards a more balanced territorial development*' (European Commission, 1999:29). The guidelines go on to state (on page 32):

"*If the Union is to enjoy the best possible conditions for development, towns and rural areas must complement each other. The synergies to be encouraged in each region assisted by the Structural Funds must be those that favour the multi-centred and hence more balanced territorial development of the European Union. Rural areas must have access to the specialist services that only urban centres can offer. City dwellers need to be provided with the food supplies and natural, tourism and recreational facilities which rural areas can offer.*"

On *access to infrastructure and knowledge*, part 1 of the 1999 guidelines (Conditions for growth and employment) identifies accessibility as one of

the main goals of improvements in the transport system, stating that transport programmes should '*reflect the need to improve regional accessibility*' (European Commission, 1999:5). Access to information (and the information society) is recognised as being dependent on an efficient basic telecommunications infrastructure.

The importance of cultural and natural heritage is mentioned in relation to urban and, more specifically, to rural areas. The document states that '*environmental protection must be a major rural policy priority including the preservation of the countryside and natural resources, traditional rural areas, the promotion of agricultural tourism and the renovation of villages*' (European Commission, 1999:31).

Issues of *vertical, horizontal, and spatial integration* are not explicitly mentioned in either the 1999 guidelines or the 2003 revision.

1.3.2.2 Guidelines for INTERREG III (2000 and 2004)

Guidelines for the INTERREG III Programme (2000-2006) were published in 2000, a year after the publication of the ESDP. These make direct reference to the ESDP in the text, stating for example that Strand B proposals (involving transnational cooperation) should take account of Community policy priorities such as the TENs and the recommendations for territorial development of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP). Indirect reference to the ESDP can also be found in the title of the guidelines, which refers to the '*balanced development of the European territory*'. The guidelines were updated in 2004, primarily in order to take the accession countries into account. Apart from the changes in eligible areas, the content of the guidelines remained the same as those issued in 2000. Thus, references to the ESDP and associated concepts are the same in the 2000 and the 2004 documents.

The issues of polycentric development and urban-rural relationships are mentioned in the guidelines. The priority topics identified for transnational cooperation (Strand B) projects include the elaboration of '*operational spatial development strategies on a transnational scale, including cooperation among cities and between urban and rural areas, with a view to promoting polycentric and sustainable development*'. Urban-rural relationships and polycentric development are clearly central here. The indicative list of priority topics and eligible measures for Strand A (cross-border cooperation) projects also includes the issue of cooperation between urban and rural areas to promote sustainable development.

In terms of access to infrastructure and knowledge, the priority topics identified for transnational cooperation (Strand B) projects include the promotion of efficient and sustainable transport systems and improved access to the information society.

The guidelines also contain reference to the management of the natural and cultural heritage. One of the priority topics identified for transnational cooperation (Strand B) projects includes the management of cultural heritage and natural resources. The indicative list of priority topics and eligible measures for Strand A (cross-border cooperation) projects also mentions the issue of the preservation of rural heritage.

Issues of *vertical, horizontal and spatial integration* can be found in the guidelines. For example, the guidelines highlight the need for a more integrated approach to the implementation of the Community Initiatives and coordination between INTERREG III and external Community policy instruments. The guidelines contend that such an integrated approach requires '*truly joint structures to prepare the programmes, involve the parties concerned, select the operations, manage the whole and coordinate and monitor the implementation of programming and, if appropriate, the joint mechanisms for the management of measures and operations*' (European Commission, 2000:5).

1.3.2.3 Draft Strategic Guidelines for Cohesion Policy, 2007-2013 (2005)

As a first step in launching the discussion of the priorities for the new generation of cohesion policy, the European Commission published draft Community Strategic Guidelines in July 2005 entitled "Cohesion Policy in Support of Growth and Jobs: Community Strategic Guidelines, 2007-2013". The financial instruments of cohesion policy are the Structural Funds (the European Regional Development Funds, ERDF, and the European Social Fund, ESF) and the Cohesion Fund. The Guidelines set out a framework for these financial instruments. These instruments aim to promote '*balanced, harmonious and sustainable development throughout the EU and improve the quality of life of Europe's citizens*'. The new European territorial cooperation objective aims to '*promote stronger integration of the territory of the Union in all its dimensions*' (p10). In so doing, cohesion policy '*supports the balanced and sustainable development of the territory of the Union at the level of its macro-regions and reduces the "barrier effects" through cross-border cooperation and the exchange of best practices*' (p10). The key test for programmes in the future, according to the Commission, will be that of their contribution to growth and jobs in line with the renewed Lisbon agenda.

The document contains no explicit mention of polycentricity, polycentric urban development, or urban-rural relationships. It does, however, refer to the need for more balanced development and recognises the important role of urban areas for issues such as growth and jobs, implying that competitiveness can be improved by the clustering and networking of cities (p29).

The document indicates that accessibility is one of a limited number of key priorities of cohesion policy. It identifies three priorities for programmes co-financed through cohesion policy: the first of these is the '*improvement of the attractiveness of Member States, regions and cities by improving accessibility, ensuring adequate quality and level of services, and preserving their environmental potential*' (p12).

Issues concerning the natural and cultural heritage are briefly mentioned in relation to urban and rural areas within the section entitled '*Taking account of the territorial dimension of cohesion policy*' (pp29-32).

The issues of vertical, horizontal and spatial integration are touched upon in a number of places in the guidelines. One of the stated aims of the document is to '*ensure that Community priorities are better integrated into national and regional development programmes*' (p4). The document also refers to the need for an '*integrated approach to territorial cohesion*' and '*integrated strategies for renewal, regeneration, and development in both urban and rural areas*' (p7). On territorial cohesion, the guidelines assert that the objective is to '*help achieve a more balanced development, to build sustainable communities in urban and rural areas and to seek greater consistency with other sectoral policies which have a spatial impact*' (p29). According to the document, this involves improving territorial integration and encouraging cooperation between and within regions.

1.3.3 Relationship between the INTERREG III programmes and the ESDP

As noted in section 1.3.2.1, Strand B (transnational cooperation) is the most closely related strand of the INTERREG III Initiative to the aims of the ESDP. Thus, the relationship between Strand B and the ESDP is examined in more detail in this section. Evidence is drawn from the programming documents (e.g. the Programme Complement) for all 13 INTERREG IIIB programming areas and from the mid-term evaluations of all INTERREG IIIB Programmes, many of which consider the extent to which the programme is coherent with the ESDP.[18] The relationship between Strand A and the ESDP is also briefly examined, primarily based on information from the national reports prepared for this project. Strand

[18] Although not explicitly required by EC regulation 1260/1999 laying down general provisions on the Structural Funds, most of the mid-term evaluations of INTERREG IIIB Programmes consider, to a greater or lesser extent, the coherence of the Programme and the ESDP. Article 42 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 requires that the mid-term evaluation of INTERREG Programmes examine the initial results of the Programme, its relevance and the extent to which the targets have been attained. It also requires the assessment of the use of financial resources and the operation of monitoring and implementation.

C is also examined briefly later in this section drawing on programming documents for the four INTERREG IIIC programming areas.

1.3.3.1 Relationship between the INTERREG IIIA programmes and the ESDP

For most countries cross-border co-operation is considered as a useful tool ensuring both concrete implementation and the overall efficiency of the ESDP process. In Belgium, the ESDP has been used in cross-border spatial planning and has brought added value, although not as much as could have been expected. In addition, Denmark and Sweden point out that the Øresund region is seen as being closely related to the themes and aims of EU spatial policy and the ESDP's policy themes. At the same time however the discourse on Øresund-integration, planning perspectives and the establishment of various institutions to promote the region's integration actually predates the ESDP.

In Germany, co-operation in terms of cross-border or transnational dimensions is seen as a very important driver of the application of the ESDP. The INTERREG programme is considered the main instrument for the application of the ESDP. Sector specific aspects dominate the discussion in the majority of INTERREG projects, pushing the ESDP debate into the background. Austria, Finland, France, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal, and Norway also make reference to the ESDP influence in the INTERREG IIIA programmes.

Some countries mention the fact that local cross-border co-operation and arrangements concerning spatial development for cities and regions have not been affected by the ESDP. These include Hungary, the Netherlands, and the UK. In the UK they may be locally important but they are not of major significance for spatial planning in a national context. Joint planning agencies, joint plans, and joint committees for cross-border co-operation have however come into being since the beginning of the ESDP process in some countries, including, Finland, France, Hungary, Norway, and Sweden.

1.3.3.2 Relationship between the INTERREG IIIB programmes and the ESDP

The table in Annex 9 provides a number of examples of measures from INTERREG IIIB Programmes that show coherence with the three ESDP policy guidelines, namely:

1. development of a balanced and polycentric urban system and a new urban-rural relationship
2. securing parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge

3. sustainable development, prudent management and protection of nature and cultural heritage

What is apparent from the table is that, unsurprisingly, the main priorities of most Strand IIIB Programmes are quite coherent with the ESDP policy guidelines. This is unsurprising since the 2000 Communication from the European Commission laying down the guidelines for INTERREG III specifies that Strand B proposals should take account of the ESDP (see also section 1.3.2.2). In some areas, programming priorities directly reflect the ESDP policy guidelines (e.g. Atlantic Area, CADSES and the North Sea Region), whereas in other areas, the programming priorities bear much fewer similarities with the ESDP policy guidelines (e.g. Baltic Sea, Indian Ocean Area and Northern Periphery). Also noteworthy here is the fact that the programme priorities in a few programming areas do not always reflect all three ESDP policy guidelines very closely. In some programming areas, for example, it is difficult to identify priorities that are relevant to polycentric urban development or urban-rural relationships (Annex 9).

An examination of the allocation of financial resources according to the priorities of each of the INTERREG IIIB Programmes reveals that, in general terms, funding is skewed towards priorities concerning sustainable development, prudent management and protection of nature and cultural heritage. This is particularly the case in programming areas that cover parts of southern Europe (i.e. Mediterranean). For programming areas that cover parts of Northern Europe (both North West Europe and the Baltic), funding is often skewed towards priorities concerning the parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge. In all programming areas, funding is relatively more limited for priorities concerning the development of a balanced and polycentric urban system and a new urban-rural relationship.

All mid-term evaluations of the INTERREG IIIB Programmes, with the exceptions of the mid-term evaluations of the ARCHIMED, Central and Danubian Space (CADSES) and North West Europe (NWE)[19] programming areas, consider the extent to which the programme is coherent with the ESDP. Some of the mid-term evaluations contain brief mention of coherence with the ESDP while others contain a more detailed examination of this issue. The mid-term evaluation of the Western Mediterranean (MEDOCC) Programme, for example, contains a whole annex that considers the coherence between the programme and the ESDP. The mid-term evaluation of the North Sea Programme highlights the fact that the coherence between the ESDP and projects funded under the programme is part of the process of project evaluation. Projects are

[19] Although the mid-term evaluation of the NWE Programme did not consider coherence with the ESDP, the update of the mid-term evaluation of the NWE Programme did.

scored according to the degree to which they assist in implementing the ESDP, the Spatial Perspective for the North Sea Region (NORVISION) and/or the EU Trans-European Networks. Of the 20 project applications that had been approved at the time of preparing the mid-term evaluation of the North Sea Programme, 20% of proposals (i.e. 4 proposals) scored highly in terms of assisting in implementing the ESDP, the Spatial Perspective for the North Sea Region (NORVISION) and/or the EU Trans-European Networks. Seventy percent of proposals (i.e. 14 proposals) scored moderately in terms of assisting in implementing the ESDP, the Spatial Perspective for the North Sea Region (NORVISION) and/or the EU Trans-European Networks, while 10% of proposals (i.e. 2 proposals) received a low score on this criterion. Other programming areas have similar requirements although these are not always part of the formal evaluation process for project proposals. In the Alpine Space and CADSES programming areas, for example, conformity with the ESDP is considered during project selection.

A number of projects can be found within the 13 INTERREG IIIB programmes that are specifically focused around concepts from the ESDP. Examples include the following:[20]

- POLYNET (North West Europe Programme, Measure 1.2) concerning the sustainable management of European polycentric mega-city regions examines changes in functional connections and information flows
- POLY.DEV (CADSES Programme, Measure 1.1) concerning best practices in spatial planning for the promotion of sustainable polycentric development
- TOWN-NET (North Sea Programme, Measure 1.1) concerning aspects of spatial development and the ESDP, namely polycentric development, regional balance and urban-rural relations

For most countries, local transnational and co-operation arrangements concerning spatial development for cities and regions have been affected by the ESDP, mostly in the INTERREG IIIB/IIC framework (e.g. Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia). In Germany, the INTERREG programme, particularly under strand IIIB, is considered the main instrument for the application of the ESDP.

For Austria, Switzerland, and the UK, the local transnational and co-operation arrangements concerning spatial development for cities and regions have not been affected by the ESDP. The UK is covered by three transnational study areas; though it is not clear what impact such projects

[20] This is an indicative list and is not intended to be comprehensive.

have had on spatial planning on the ground. In Finland, Italy and Sweden joint planning agencies, joint plans, and joint committees for transnational co-operation have come into being since the beginning of the ESDP process.

1.3.3.3 The influence of the ESDP on INTERREG IIIB in practice: the example of North West Europe (NWE)

The drafting, in 2001, of the Community Initiative Programme (CIP) for NWE area, which replaced the North West Metropolitan Area (NWMA) Operational Programme, was subject to fierce debate about its content. These debates took place within the International Working Party (IWP) that provided the temporary structure that carried out the work and which later became the Monitoring committee.[21] The IWP contains all seven NWE countries plus Switzerland, which has a different status (Swiss cantons are not eligible for ERDF money, so the participation of Swiss partners has to be exclusively financed out of Swiss means, including possible subsidies from the Swiss Confederation). At the core of the CIP are five priorities (Table 4), three of which directly reflect the thematic priorities of the ESDP and the NWMA Spatial Vision:

- A more attractive and coherent system of cities, towns and regions (NWE Priority 1)
- Accessibility to transport, communication infrastructure and knowledge (NWE Priority 2)
- Stronger ecological infrastructure and protection of cultural heritage (NWE Priority 4)

In addition, two other priorities (Priority 3 – Water resources and the prevention of flood damage and Priority 5 – Enhancing maritime functions and promoting territorial integration across seas) originated from the intensive lobbying of actors who had previously co-operated under IRMA, a strand of INTERREG IIC. According to one interviewee (see Annex 10 for a list of interviewees), both of these priorities form legitimate policy areas (perhaps more than those inspired by the ESDP) where the added value of transnational cooperation can easily be demonstrated.

[21] The monitoring committee could not draft the CIP since a Monitoring and Steering Committee can only come into existence after the Commission has approved the CIP.

Table 4 NWE Priorities and Measures

Priority	1. A more attractive and coherent system of cities, towns and regions	2. Accessibility to transport, communication infrastructure and knowledge	3. Water resources and the prevention of flood damage	4. Stronger ecological infrastructure and protection of cultural heritage	5. Enhancing maritime functions and promoting territorial integration across seas	6. Technical assistance
Measure 1	More attractive metropolitan areas in the global and European context	Sustainable mobility management	Land use and water systems	Stronger ecological infrastructure, reduced ecological footprint	Promote trans-national co-operation in the enhancement of maritime functions and in the development of more sustainable links between seaports and their hinterlands	Technical assistance for management, implementation , monitoring and content
Measure 2	Coherent and polycentric pattern of complementary cities, towns and rural areas, coastal and peripheral areas	Improved access to the Information Society	The prevention of flood damage	Protection and creative enhancement of the cultural heritage	Facilitating co-operation across and between maritime and inland regions	Technical assistance for other expenditure

Priorities 1, 2 and 4 of the NWE CIP correspond with the NWMA Spatial Vision Principles 1+2, 5+6, and 3+4 respectively (NWMA Spatial Vision Group, 2000 pp.28-29). The NWMA Spatial Vision has in turn been largely influenced by the ESDP, but elaborated on the three guidelines by adding an internal and external dimension to it, hence the 6 instead of 3 principles. The CIP is clearly inspired by the ESDP, but mainly via the NWMA Spatial Vision, as an intermediate step.

Any formal project application to the NWE has to be sent to the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS). This is not always the case in other INTERREG areas. The JTS first checks against eligibility criteria, including criterion 4, which requests 'a positive contribution to sustainable development and to the implementation of at least one policy option of the ESDP' (NWE, 2003, p52). This particular criterion has been cited in 6 of the 31 ineligible project proposals to have been reviewed.

The JTS then assesses project applications against selection criteria (NWE, 2003) and submits a project-ranking list to the Steering Committee. The ranking is based on how the project scores[22] on various selection criteria. The first six of these criteria are relevant for the application of the ESDP (Table 5). Of the 49 project applications to have been conditionally approved by the JTS, all scored between 0 and 2 on selection criterion 4,

[22] Scores vary between very poor (-2), poor (-1), fair (0), good (+1) or excellent (+2).

with a majority scoring a 'fair' and only four proposals scoring an 'excellent'. Ineligible projects generally scored far worse on selection criterion 4 (often 'poor'), which implies some sort of correlation, albeit a weak one, between eligibility and conformance with the ESDP.

Table 5 Project Selection Criteria NWE relevant for ESDP application

I. TRANSNATIONALITY
1. The project involves a high level of transnational co-operation
II. TERRITORIAL PLANNING
2. The project adopts an innovative approach to territorial planning
3. The project will achieve a high level of cross-sector integration
III. EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT
4. The project builds on existing transnational planning documents (e.g. the ESDP, the NWE Spatial Vision)
5. The project contributes to a more geographically-balanced development of the European territory
6a. The project improves the territorial impact of EU policies [Action and Investment Projects only]
6b. The project delivers a useful contribution to the further development of the ESDP [Study Projects only]

National Contact Points play an important role in the NWE area, since they assist the lead partners in their country in developing good proposals. As one interviewee described, most projects are truly bottom-up initiatives and often the partners involved do not know about the ESDP. Depending on the initial project idea and whether this fits within the ESDP and, more important often, national interests, Contact Points decide to invest in the project.

According to the interviewees, the quality of proposals has improved during the course of the programme. At its second meeting in 2002, the Steering Committee expressed its concern about not being able to fully allocate the budget, particularly in the case of priorities 1 and 5. This and in particular the '$n+2$ rule' (which requires budget commitment within two years) resulted in a somewhat more relaxed way in which the proposals were assessed.

In summary, the ESDP has certainly played a role in the NWE INTERREG IIIB area. It has also influenced the CIP as well as the selection and approval of projects, none of which scored below 'fair' as regards their contribution to the application of the ESDP. Nevertheless, the use and application of the ESDP in INTERREG IIIB areas also seems quite dependent on the institutional context. Thus, the use and application of the ESDP in other INTERREG IIIB projects may not necessarily follow the same pattern.

1.3.3.4 Relationship between the INTERREG IIIC programmes and the ESDP

INTERREG IIIC supports a variety of topics closely related to implementation of EU regional policy. The exchange of experience and networking focuses on the following topics:

- *Objective 1 and 2*. This category of INTERREG IIIC operations is directed at promoting co-operation of projects focussing on themes related to Structural Funds Objective 1 and 2.
- *INTERREG programmes*. INTERREG IIIC operations under this heading aim to promote the exchange of experience and networking among areas involved in current or previous INTERREG programmes. These operations take experience collected in the past as the starting point to further develop project and policy approaches. They can also focus on the implementation of INTERREG programmes.
- *Urban development*. In addition to actions supported under the URBAN Initiative and the mainstream objective programmes, this category of operations focuses on wider co-operation actions related to urban development issues. This topic is open to all cities and urban areas, including small and medium-sized towns.
- *Innovative Actions*. This topic focuses on promoting co-operation between regions involved in one or several of the three themes of the regional Innovative Actions for 2000-2006. Operations under this topic encourage the transfer and implementation of successful project ideas from one region to another.
- *Other appropriate subjects*. In addition to the already mentioned topics, a number of other appropriate subjects closely related to regional development can be addressed. Examples include maritime and coastal co-operation, spatial planning issues, insular and ultra-peripheral issues, solutions to natural or man-made catastrophes, and alleviating the economic effects of handicaps such as very low population density or mountainous conditions. Initiatives can also be taken in other areas in which interregional cooperation is called for, such as technological development, small and medium-sized enterprises, the information society, tourism, culture and employment, entrepreneurship, and environment.

In addition to the above topics, three INTERREG IIIC programming areas (North, East and South) include a special priority linking European Union border regions with the EU candidate countries.

All Community Initiative Programmes for the four INTERREG IIIC programming areas make passing reference to the ESDP in setting out the

aim of the Initiative. The documents state that the INTERREG IIIC Initiative contributes towards a process of balanced and sustainable territorial development in Europe, which is the core of the European Spatial Development Perspective. There are no further references to the ESDP or to key concepts from the ESDP in these programming documents. Neither is there reference to the ESDP or to key concepts from the ESDP in the Programme Complements for any of the four INTERREG IIIC programming areas. The INTERREG IIIC joint Mid Term Evaluation of all four programming areas, carried out in 2003, also makes no reference to the ESDP or to any of the key concepts from it.

1.3.4 Summary

The ESDP helped to give rise to INTERREG IIC, which was followed up by Strand B (transnational cooperation) of the INTERREG III Initiative, which is consequently the most closely related strand to the aims of the ESDP. Unsurprisingly then, the main priorities of most Strand IIIB Programmes are quite coherent with the ESDP policy guidelines.[23] After all, the European Commission guidelines for INTERREG III specify that Strand B proposals should take account of the ESDP. In some areas, programming priorities directly reflect the ESDP policy guidelines, whereas in others the programming priorities bear much fewer similarities to the ESDP policy guidelines. There is however no clear spatial or geographical divide according to their conformity to the ESDP's policy guidelines.

In general terms, funding is skewed towards priorities concerning sustainable development, prudent management and the protection of nature and cultural heritage. This is particularly so in programming areas that cover parts of southern Europe. For programming areas that cover parts of Northern Europe, funding is often skewed towards priorities concerning the parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge. In almost all programming areas, funding is relatively more limited for priorities concerning the development of a balanced and polycentric urban system and a new urban-rural relationship.

Some programming areas have made ESDP conformity an eligibility and selection criterion, thus establishing a direct link between the ESDP and the contents of projects. The application of the ESDP through INTERREG is therefore mixed. Whereas on the one hand the causal link between the ESDP and INTERREG measures and projects is very indirect with several

[23] Nevertheless, one of the interviewees in the European Commission (see section 1.4) regards the Commission's INTERREG guidelines as a missed opportunity to put more issues from the ESDP into the programming arena. The interviewee is of the view that more could have been done within DG-Regional Policy to introduce more issues from the ESDP into INTERREG.

steps in between,[24] the link between the ESDP and some INTERREG measures and projects is sometimes virtually direct (i.e. some ESDP concepts have been directly used to define measures and projects).

1.4 Sectoral policies and programmes of the European Commission

1.4.1 Introduction

According to the ESDP, successive European Treaties such as the Single European Act, the Maastricht Treaty and the Amsterdam Treaty, have led to a stronger EU influence in the elaboration and implementation of national and regional policies and thus on European spatial development. This influence has mainly been via a number of 'territorially significant' EU sectoral policies.[25] One of the ways in which the ESDP was legitimised is that the spatial impacts of EU-policies are often seen as uneven and problematic. This generates extra costs, particularly at lower administrative levels, where spatial conflicts caused by EU policies have to be solved on the ground. According to the ESDP, such costs can be avoided if the territorial dimension is taken into account during the development of policies and co-ordination takes place between them. The ESDP identifies seven key areas where the European Commission's policies and activities have 'territorially significant' implications for spatial development in the EU:[26]

1. Trans-European Networks (TENs)
2. Structural Funds
3. Environment Policy
4. Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)
5. Community Competition Policy

[24] There are various intermediate steps (and programming documents) between the ESDP and the implementation of INTERREG projects. There are for example the Community INTERREG guidelines, the Community Initiative Programmes, the Operational Programmes. In addition we have the procedures for funding allocation and project selection. All of these stages mean that the translation of the ESDP and the key concepts within the document into practical projects may be very indirect and that certain messages or concepts from the ESDP can often be lost along the way.

[25] 'Territorially significant' in this context means that EU policies affect the spatial pattern of the economy, society or the environment and thereby alter land use patterns or landscapes.

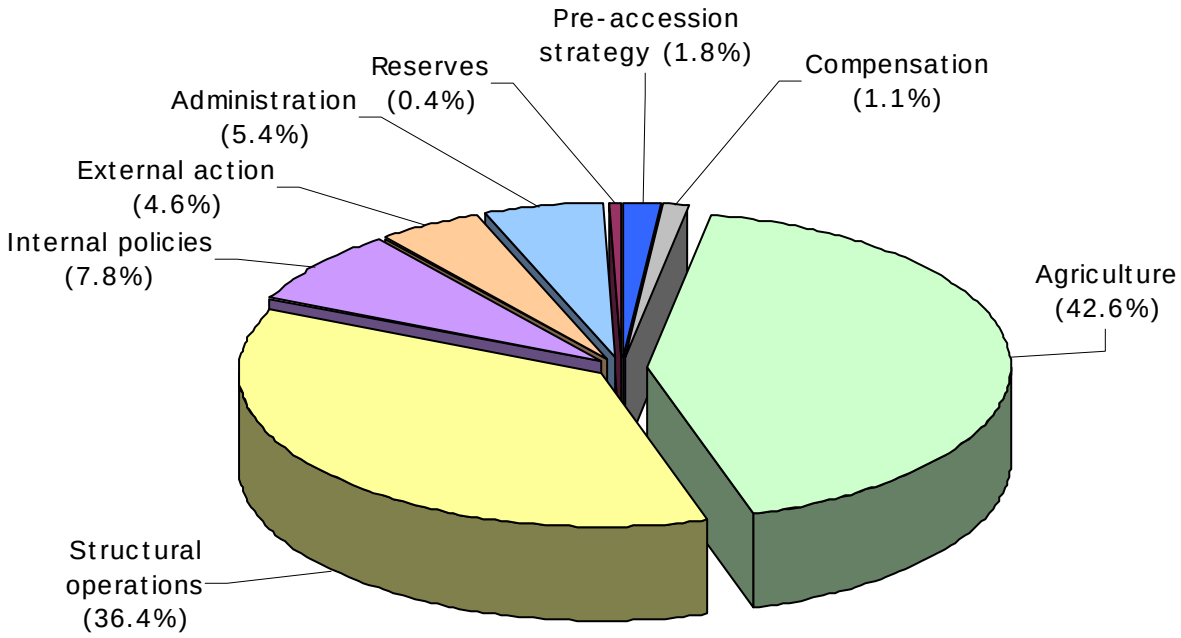
[26] An overview of spatially relevant EU policies can be found in the third interim report of ESPON project 2.1.1 (Territorial Impact of EU Transport and TEN Policies). A more detailed assessment of the territorial impacts of European agricultural policy, transport policy, and environmental policy can be found in the EU study entitled, 'Spatial impacts of community policies and costs of non-coordination' (Robert et al, 2001). A more recent study entitled 'Unseen Europe' focuses on the spatial impact of EU policies in The Netherlands (Ravensteyn and Evers, 2004).

6. Research, Technology and Development (RTD)

7. Loan Activities of the European Investment Bank

The Structural Funds, Trans-European Networks and environment policies are particularly important, according to the ESDP, since they have the most direct effect on development activities in Europe. From a financial perspective, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the Structural and Cohesion Funds are the most important policy measures of the EU (Figure 2). Agricultural subsidies and rural development projects currently account for 43% of the total EU budget (€43 billion for agricultural subsidies and €7 billion for rural development and accompanying measures). Regional aid ('structural operations') is the second biggest item in the EU budget and currently accounts for 36% of the total EU budget (€37 billion for Structural Funds and €5 billion for the Cohesion Fund). Internal policies (including a substantial amount of funding for research) and external action (foreign aid and foreign policy) currently account for 8% and 5% of the EU's budget respectively.

Figure 2 EU Budget 2005



Source: European Commission (2005a)

In most cases, the objectives of EU policies, as defined in the European Treaties, do not have an explicit spatial character but nevertheless have a significant impact on the territory of Europe. According to the ESDP, spatial impacts depend on the specific method of intervention: whether for example the intervention is *financial* (e.g. income support, regional and horizontal structural measures, sectoral measures such as research programme financing), *legislative* (e.g. competition rules, market

liberalisation, environmental legislation, market-based instruments) or *planning* (e.g. trans-European transport and energy networks) in nature. Some directives also directly affect the use of land (e.g. the Birds Directive or the Habitats Directive). In addition, a number of policies directly influence the behaviour of economic actors, which in turn affect patterns of spatial development. The ESDP identifies a number of specific ways in which policies can have a spatial dimension, including the following:

- Designated areas for assistance or protection, such as those defined under the Structural Funds, the Habitats Directive and the Natura 2000 network, which means these areas qualify for special treatment (e.g. funding for development, permissible types of development)
- Areas/corridors for the improvement or provision *of infrastructure*, such as the Trans-European Networks (particularly for transport and energy) and related infrastructure (e.g. freight distribution centres or power stations), which exert a direct impact on territorial development
- Regionally differentiated policies, such as innovation policy that takes account of regional industries/specialisation or energy policies that take account of regional energy resources, which can lead to different policy responses in different regions
- Integrated multi-sectoral initiatives that try to develop integrated and multisectoral approaches with a strong spatial dimension such as the INTERREG Initiative to stimulate interregional cooperation (see also section 1.3) and the LEADER+ Initiative on rural development (Action 1 for example supports integrated territorial development strategies)

These are examined later in this chapter in the context of different policy sectors within the EU: designated areas for protection and areas/corridors for the improvement or provision of infrastructure are covered in section 1.4.5 (attention to spatial issues), while regionally differentiated policies and integrated multi-sectoral initiatives are examined in section 1.4.6 (role of inter-sectoral cooperation).

1.4.2 Evolution of sectoral policies

Transport, together with agriculture, competition, and external trade, was one of the Community's first common policies. Since the Treaty of Rome, which came into force in 1958, transport policy has concentrated on removing barriers at the borders between Member States and promoting the free movement of goods and persons. The emergence of European energy policy came later: the oil crises during the 1970s being one of the

main stimuli for the development of the policy. The main areas of current Community transport and energy policy are:

- completing the internal market for energy and transport
- ensuring sustainable development in transport and energy
- deploying the major networks within Europe (primarily the Trans-European Networks)
- space management (single airspace and Galileo)
- improving safety
- supporting enlargement (securing the adoption of the Community's body of laws, or '*acquis communautaire*', concerning transport and energy)
- expanding international cooperation http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/en/intro_1_en.html

The need for regional development policies was also recognised from the very beginning of the European Community experiment. The necessity to promote balanced development by reducing the gap between the different regions and providing assistance for regions to catch up was recognised in the preamble to the Treaty of Rome. The Treaty provided for both the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Social Fund (ESF) to promote employment and improve the mobility of workers within the Community. The other instruments designed to assist development in the Member States were introduced as the European Community developed and new Member States joined. Instruments of cohesion policy, such as the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund, seek to strengthen the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the Union by for example using these instruments to help lagging regions to catch up, declining industrial regions to restructure, declining rural economies to diversify and deprived urban neighbourhoods to redevelop. Spain has traditionally been the biggest recipient of regional aid, followed by Italy and Germany (primarily to the poorer regions in these countries: southern Italian and eastern Germany respectively). With the accession of 10 additional Member States to the European Union in 2004, the competition for regional aid has increased. Much regional aid is now being targeted to these new Member States while aid to many of the former EU15 Member States is being decreased http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/europe/04/money/html/regional_aid.stm.

Environmental action by the Community began in 1972 with four successive action programmes, based on a vertical and sectoral approach to ecological problems. During this period, the Community adopted some 200 pieces of legislation, chiefly concerned with limiting pollution by introducing minimum standards, notably for waste management, water pollution and air pollution. The Treaty of the Amsterdam, which was

signed in 1997 and which entered into force in 1999, enshrines the principle of sustainable development as one of the European Community's aims and makes a high degree of environmental protection one of its absolute priorities. The range of environmental instruments available expanded as environmental policy developed. Not only has the Community adopted framework legislation providing for a high level of environmental protection while guaranteeing the operation of the internal market, it has also introduced a financial instrument (the LIFE programme) as well as technical instruments (e.g. eco-labelling, the Community system of environmental management and auditing, the system for assessment of the effects of public and private projects on the environment, and the criteria applicable to environmental inspections in the Member States) http://europe.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/l28066.htm.

Agriculture was an issue of significant importance for European policy-makers when the Treaty of Rome was being negotiated and agreed in 1957. The memory of post-war food shortages was still vivid, and agriculture constituted a key element from the outset of the European Community. The Treaty of Rome defined the general objectives of a common agricultural policy. In 1960, the six founding Member States of the European Community adopted the principles of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Two years later, in 1962, the CAP came into force. The CAP still remains high on the European political agenda, particularly given the size of the CAP budget: agricultural subsidies and rural development projects account for 43% of the 2005 budget. France has traditionally been the biggest recipient of these funds. In general, agriculture plays a larger role in the economies of the new Member States than it does in the more developed economies of the older Member States. They will in time become major recipients of agricultural and rural aid. However, the EU is under pressure to reduce agricultural subsidies in order to give developing countries a better chance to export food to Europe. In terms of the LEADER+ Initiative (2000-2006), Spain is the biggest recipient in absolute terms, while Greece and Portugal receive most funds from the Initiative on a *per capita* basis http://europe.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/g24208.htm.

1.4.3 Importance of cross-cutting concepts

A variety of crosscutting concepts can be found in current policy documents. Concepts such as sustainable development, social cohesion and equal opportunities for example feature in many European policy documents across a range of policy sectors. This is directly related to the fact that these concepts are enshrined in one or more of the European treaties. Sustainable development is enshrined as an overarching goal of European Union policy in the Amsterdam Treaty, economic and social cohesion are set as objectives of the Union in the Maastricht Treaty (the

Treaty of the European Union) and equal opportunities for women and men is contained in the Treaty of Rome (Article 119). Certain crosscutting concepts have a specific spatial dimension. Examples here include territorial cohesion, polycentric urban development, urban-rural linkages, and parity of access to infrastructure and/or knowledge and management of the natural and/or cultural heritage. These are all identified in the ESDP (although not necessarily created by the ESDP). Only one of these concepts, territorial cohesion, is enshrined in a European Treaty (the Amsterdam Treaty refers to social and territorial cohesion[27]); the others have less official status.

The importance and origin of these crosscutting concepts, both the spatial and non-spatial concepts, were explored during interviews with officials within the European Commission (see Annex 11 for the location details of the officials interviewed). A number of general observations can be made concerning the importance and origin of these concepts according to the transcripts of the interviews:

- Competitiveness is considered an important crosscutting issue across many policy sectors in the European Commission. Emphasis has increased in recent years primarily as a consequence of the greater initial focus on the Lisbon Strategy. In DG-Agriculture and Rural Development, for example, the issue of competitiveness is reflected in the first axis of the new rural development strategy ('Improving competitiveness for farming and forestry').
- Innovation and sustainable development are considered very important crosscutting issues within some policy sectors within the European Commission. Interviewees in DG-Agriculture and Rural Development, DG-Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and DG-Enterprise and Industry consider innovation and sustainable development to be important for their area of policy. They also consider that innovation has become more important over recent years, primarily as a consequence of the Lisbon Strategy. Some interviewees, on the other hand, consider these two crosscutting issues to be less relevant. Some interviewees from DG-Environment and DG-Energy and Transport consider innovation to be less relevant to their area of policy. One of the interviewees from DG-Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities considers the issue of sustainable development peripheral to policy within his Directorate General and that the issue 'has more to do with environment policy'.

[27] The draft European constitution also contains a reference to economic, social and territorial cohesion under Article 3.

- Economic cohesion is considered very important. Officials from DG Regio, which is responsible for cohesion policy, consider the pursuit of balance development of the EU to be a fundament of European integration. Its legitimisation is to compensate for excessive differences in development between regions as a result of the single market from which some regions profit more than others.
- Social cohesion and equal opportunities are also considered important crosscutting issues by interviewees in some policy sectors. Naturally, these issues are considered important in DG-Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, which has more ownership and responsibility for these issues. The level of importance attached to these two concepts is not always equal however. The interviewee from DG-Energy and Transport for example considers social cohesion an important concept for transport policy but considers equal opportunities less relevant. A number of interviewees consider both concepts to be of low relevance to their policy sectors (e.g. environmental policy).
- Most of the crosscutting concepts with a specific spatial dimension (territorial cohesion, polycentric urban development, urban-rural linkages, parity of access to infrastructure and/or knowledge and management of the natural and/or cultural heritage) are not considered very important by many interviewees. In fact some interviewees seemed uncertain as to the meaning of some of these concepts, particularly the concepts of polycentric urban development and urban-rural linkages. An interviewee in DG-Enterprise and Industry however considers that the concept of territorial cohesion has become more important for his Directorate General, especially since EU enlargement in 2004. The Innovating Regions in Europe (IRE) Network is cited as an example of an initiative supported by DG-Enterprise and Industry that promotes territorial cohesion. What is not clear is how different interviewees interpret territorial cohesion. For some it may be that territorial cohesion is interpreted in a more limited sense (e.g. providing a minimum level of services of general economic interest), whereas territorial cohesion may be interpreted by others as something more extensive.

In general, the crosscutting concepts that are enshrined in European Treaties are considered to be more important for policy than the concepts that do not feature in the European Treaties. As few crosscutting issues with a specific spatial dimension are enshrined in European Treaties, territorial crosscutting issues are generally considered less important for policy than other crosscutting concepts such as sustainable development, social cohesion and equal opportunities. This may hamper the use and application of the ESDP in EU policies.

1.4.4 Changes in delivery mechanisms

It is apparent from the interviews with Commission officials that delivery mechanisms for policies in many sectors have changed in recent years, or are about to change. As regards regional policy for the 2007-2013 programming period, the idea is to add a new objective, 'Regional Competitiveness and Employment', to the classic convergence policies (such as the current Objective 1). All regions, other than those receiving 'convergence' funding, will be eligible. High performers among regions could thus apply. The Third Cohesion Report puts significant emphasis on making regions more competitive by using their endogenous potential. This new delivery system probably fits well with the possible re-nationalisation of the structural funds, as some Member States would like. In DG-Agriculture and Rural Development, the 2003 CAP reform alters the basis of direct aid to producers, paid to farmers or producers' associations. It introduces a new system of single farm payments (income support). Aid is being progressively phased out and decoupled from production. Delivery mechanisms for rural development are set to change after 2007: the successor to the LEADER+ Initiative will no longer be financed by EU structural funds but will instead be funded through mainstream rural development programmes. In DG-Environment, emphasis is being placed on diversifying environmental instruments and on introducing environmental taxes (according to the 'polluter pays' principle), environmental accounting and voluntary agreements. In the case of water, policies and directives previously focused on specific types of water (e.g. drinking water, bathing water) or specific types of problems (e.g. pollution from nitrates, urban waste water) whereas more recently, a framework directive has been implemented to cover all types of water and contamination sources. In DG-Energy and Transport, an executive agency is currently being established which will be given the technical and administrative management tasks involved in managing the co-financing of the Trans-European Network for Transport (TEN-T). A number of TEN-T 'European Coordinators' have been appointed to ensure closer coordination between Member States along the TEN-T project corridors in order to synchronise the work schedules more closely and to reach agreement on the distribution of funds and the exact routes to be followed. In DG-Enterprise and Industry, a number of new delivery mechanisms have been introduced over recent years such as the Innovating Regions in Europe (IRE) Network, a joint platform for collaboration and exchange of experiences in the development of regional innovation policies and schemes.

1.4.5 Attention to spatial issues

When questioned about the assessment of the spatial or territorial implications of policy, a number of European Commission interviewees

referred to the EUs impact assessment procedure for major legislative and policy-defining initiatives. The procedure, which was announced in 2002, was put in place to improve the quality and coherence of the policy development process, to contribute to an effective and efficient regulatory environment and to help implement the European strategy for Sustainable Development in a more coherent way (European Commission, 2002).

Internal guidelines and a manual for impact assessment ('Impact Assessment in the Commission – Guidelines' and 'A Handbook for Impact Assessment in the Commission') were developed to assist the assessment procedure. Since 2003, all major legislative and policy-defining proposals contained in the Commission's annual Work Programme have been subject to impact assessment under the proposal while around 90 impact assessments have been carried out to date.[28]

In 2005, the Commission's internal guidelines were updated following a stocktaking exercise in 2004. In terms of territorial or spatial analysis, the new guidelines specify that assessment should consider 'the geographical distribution of effects' using various qualitative and quantitative techniques (European Commission, 2005b). The guidelines do not however contain specific details about how the territorial impacts can be assessed using these techniques and some interviewees within the European Commission referred to this point.

In DG-Agriculture and Rural Development, the 2004 Regulation on Rural Development was subject to an impact assessment, including mapping of problems to be addressed by rural development policies (e.g. nitrate vulnerable zones, areas of soil erosion). An impact assessment was also carried out for the 2005 EU Rural Development Strategy. The spatial implications of the decisions did not however feature in either of the two impact assessment reports.

In DG-Energy and Transport, various policy options for the revision of the TEN-T Guidelines were subject to an impact assessment in 2003. The assessment contained some consideration of spatial implications and interestingly made use of information from two ESPON projects (ESPON Project 1.2.1 – Transport services and networks: territorial trends and basic supply of infrastructure for territorial cohesion and ESPON Project 2.1.1 – Territorial impact of EU transport and TEN policies).

As well as the EUs impact assessment procedure for major legislative and policy-defining initiatives, the interviewees provided a few other examples to illustrate how the spatial or territorial implications of policy have been considered. The 2002 'Implementation Package' of the European Employment Strategy for example refers to '*considerable regional*

[28] See Annex 12 for a list of all impact assessments of major legislative and policy-defining initiatives carried out to date.

disparities [in Ireland]… in employment and unemployment rates but also educational levels and earnings [which] risk impeding sustained and balanced development'. According to one interviewee from DG-Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, spatial disparities are becoming '*an increasing part of employment policy discourse*'. In DG-Environment, the 2000 Water Framework Directive requires water resources to be managed by river basin, implying a coordinated, sometimes cross-border approach. According to one interviewee this is an example of an area of policy that has become more spatially oriented. In DG-Agriculture and Rural Development, one of the key actions under axis 2 of the LEADER+ Initiative is entitled 'promoting territorial balance': another possible indication that EU policy may be becoming *more* spatial. There is moreover increasing attention on spatial issues within regional policy, largely due to the concept of territorial cohesion, which was a personal interest of former Commissioner Michel Barnier, and was included in the Constitution (Article 3) together with economic and social cohesion. The Second as well as Third Cohesion Reports elaborated on the concept. The recent document 'Cohesion Policy in Support of Growth and Jobs: Community Strategic Guidelines 2007-2013' (CEC 2005) raises attention on the 'territorial dimension of cohesion policy' (see also section 1.3.2.3). Interestingly, although the Constitution has been put on hold, there is nevertheless an increasing focus on the territorial logic behind structural funds investments in regions, according to some officials of DG-Regional Policy.

1.4.6 The role of inter-sectoral cooperation

A number of interviewees expressed the view that there are strong links between various Directorates within the European Commission. Some interviewees felt that these links are stronger now than in the past. For some interviewees, the reason for this is practical. In the case of DG-Employment, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities, links with DG-Economic and Financial Affairs and with DG-Enterprise and Industry have increased mainly as a result of the need to cooperate on various actions connected with the Lisbon Strategy. In the case of DG-Agriculture and Rural Development, links with DG-Regional Policy have increased as a result of the LEADER+ Initiative, which is financed by the Structural Funds, and links with DG-Environment have increased as a result of the Soil Strategy and the forthcoming Soil Thematic Strategy. Strong links do not however exist between all Directorates. It seems that links are usually only made for practical substantive reasons. In addition, the interviewees give the impression that the drafting of policy is still very sectoral. Policy is often 'filled in' by other Directorates during consultation rounds but the drafting process is primarily based on a sectoral (departmental) approach and supplemented with a smattering of cross-

sectoral input via consultation. Even the Secretariat General, a fairly small DG, does not really co-ordinate policies. The two co-ordination instruments that the Commission has, the Inter-Service Groups and Task Forces, are *ad hoc* or temporary bodies that often deal with very specific issues.[29] Obviously, however, this is not a very receptive environment for the ESDP to find easy ways to be applied. In terms of its own goals at this point the ESDP has still a world to win.

1.4.7 Awareness of the ESDP and its influences

Most interviewees report awareness of the existence of the ESDP but many admit unfamiliarity with its content. For some interviewees, the reason given is because they did not work at the Commission at the time that the ESDP was produced. For others, the reason is because they feel that the ESDP has little connection with their work. Most interviewees report that their unfamiliarity with the ESDP is probably typical for their Directorate-General. Some interviewees hold the view that newer colleagues are less likely to have come across the ESDP than colleagues who have worked in the Commission for a period of longer time. All interviewees report that they have not heard much mention of the ESDP recently. A number of interviewees however reported that the ESDP may still be used where it lends support for a specific policy or piece of legislation (e.g. the 2001 European Sustainable Development Strategy and the 2001 White Paper on European Governance). In most other cases, the ESDP is not likely to feature in policy documents or in the development of policy. A few interviewees shared the opinion that the advisory, non-binding status of the ESDP is an important reason for the limited influence and awareness of the document. One interviewee mentioned the fact that the ESDP, although in line with the policy under his responsibility, falls short on substance and is thus not very helpful in solving specific policy issues.

One interviewee reported that the EU Maritime Policy,[30] currently being prepared in the Commission, has some similarities with the ESDP: the Maritime Policy attempts to identify the potential for beneficial synergies between sea-related sectoral policies as well as to examine how these could help improve competitiveness, encourage growth and boost employment in an economic, social and environmental sense. It covers a number of policy sectors and has a clear transnational dimension. The interviewee was intrigued as to whether issues such as institutional complexity (i.e. many actors from different sectors and different levels)

[29] As part of the ESDP consultation process, an inter-service group discussed the spatial impact of EU policies in 1998 (Commission Services, 1999; Faludi and Waterhout, 2002).

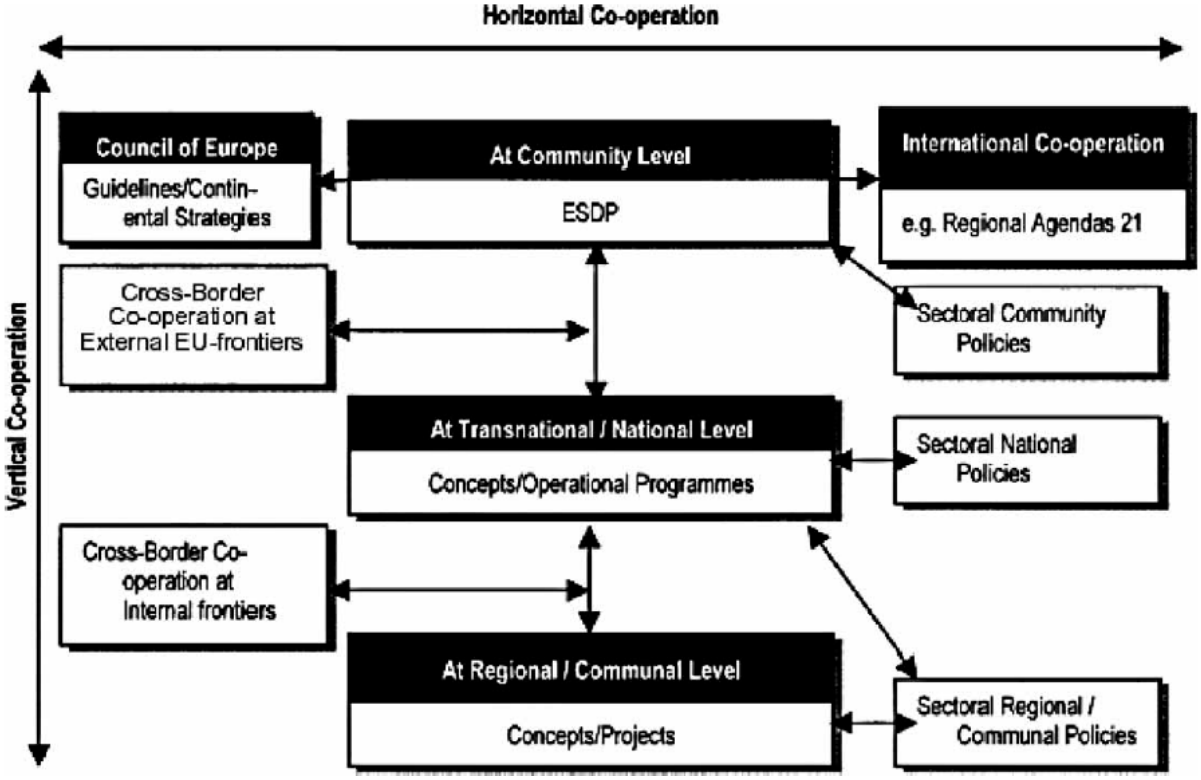
[30] Policy proposals for the EU Maritime Policy are expected to appear in a green paper in 2006.

and competence would also be as problematic for Maritime Policy as it is, in the view of the interviewee, for the ESDP.

1.4.8 Summary

The application of the ESDP at the EU level, just as at other levels of government, is institutionally complex. The figure on the ESDP below illustrating the various different ways of cooperating for spatial development (see Figure 3 below) does not show the multiple interests and priorities that need to be coordinated at one level in order to move towards horizontal policy integration. In the European Commission, policy coordination is undoubtedly a goal but arguably not the reality. As such, different directorates have different interests and priorities. The European Commission is heterogeneous and, although attempts have been made to assess policy impacts and provide some horizontal coordination of policy, the actual drafting of policy still remains very sectoral. Some cross-sectoral input is provided via consultation but this is mainly done in a reactive rather than in a proactive manner. The ESDP is mainly used where it lends support to a specific policy or piece of legislation. In most other cases, the ESDP is not likely to feature in policy documents or the in the development of policy. It is perhaps no coincidence that two of the main EU policy documents to refer to the ESDP, the EU sustainable development strategy and the White Paper on EU Governance, were both published in the same year (2001) when the ESDP was still quite new. More recently, there have been few European policy documents that refer so directly to the ESDP.

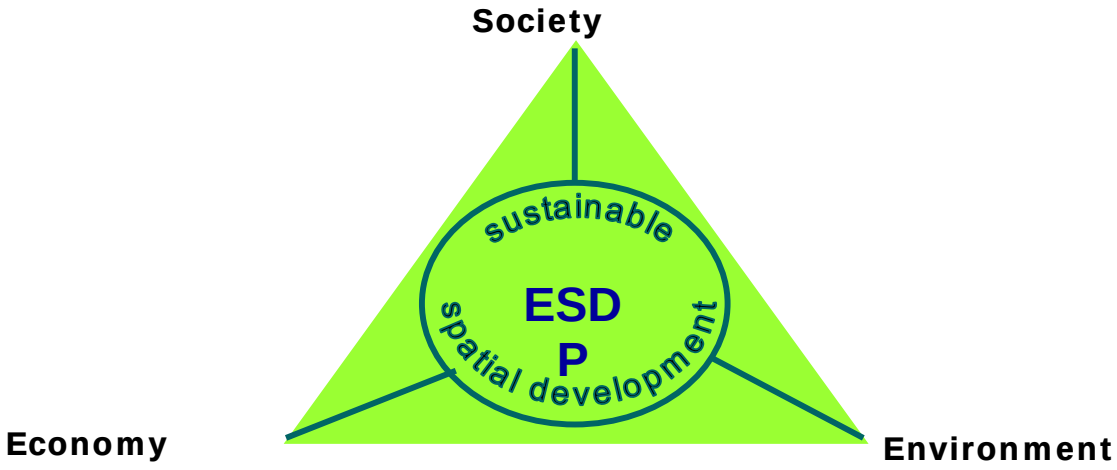
Figure 3 Ways of Cooperation for spatial development.



Source: ESDP, p36.

Crosscutting concepts that are enshrined in European Treaties are considered more important for policy than the concepts that do not feature in the European Treaties. Most concepts with a specific spatial dimension, such as polycentric urban development, urban-rural linkages, parity of access to infrastructure and/or knowledge and management of the natural and/or cultural heritage, do not feature in any of the European Treaties and are not generally considered very important for policy by many officials in the Commission. Crosscutting issues that have an economic dimension, such as competitiveness or innovation, have more resonance with policy-makers and these concepts are more often found in policy documents. The three dimensions of sustainable development, the social, the economic and the environmental, which appear in the ESDP as the key objectives for balanced and sustainable spatial development (Figure 4), would seem to be somewhat out of balance according to the interviewees: with economic considerations weighing more heavily than social or environmental considerations. This is undoubtedly linked to the Lisbon Process, but has been the case since before agreement of the Lisbon Agenda.

Figure 4 ESDP objectives for balanced and sustainable spatial development.



Source: ESDP, p10.

Although the ESDP is not that familiar to most of the DGs of the European Commission, there is evidence of a growing policy discourse on the spatial dimension of policy in the European Commission, one of the underlying issues in the ESDP. There is therefore a potential for conformity, but as yet, little actual application. Within DGs, there is awareness of the ESDP but unfamiliarity with its content. For some this is due to the age of the document – it is now see as rather 'old hat'. For others it is because the ESDP is felt to have too little connection or relevance. The ESDP is a document that lays down principles and concepts but is very difficult to apply directly. It attempts to address various levels of government but in so doing is very general and lacks specificity for any of the levels. Unsurprisingly, the ESDP is most familiar in DG-Regional Policy, which was deeply involved in its inception. The second and third reports on economic and social cohesion, for example make reference to the ESDP. So too do the Community guidelines for the INTERREG III Initiative (see above).

1.5 CEMAT – The European Council of Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning

1.5.1 Introduction

The European Council of Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning (*Conférence européenne des Ministres responsables de l'Aménagement du territoire or CEMAT*) is part of the Council of Europe. The CEMAT started its activities in 1970 when it first met in Bonn, and it brings together representatives of the 46 members of the Council of Europe in order to pursue the common objective of a sustainable spatial development of the European continent. Since the Council of Europe is a non-supranational organisation, its resolutions and proposals are non-

binding in nature. Their application depends on the Member States themselves.

CEMAT is relevant for ESDP application for several reasons. One of them is the general assumption that the Council of Europe paves the way for future EU enlargement. In the field of spatial planning it thus makes sense to let non-EU member states become accustomed to planning principles used by EU countries and regions. Another reason is that many spatial planning issues are transnational, crossing the border of the EU and neighbouring countries (which except Belarus are all part of the Council of Europe). One such example is that of the Tizsa river basin in which co-operation takes place in order to solve environmental problems.

Since 1970 the CEMAT has adopted a number of resolutions. In fact, prior to ESDP co-operation, which began in 1989 (see below), CEMAT was the prime platform for discussing spatial planning issues at the European level. Fundamental documents, which have guided spatial planning policies, have from time to time been adopted during the activities carried out over the years:

- the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter, adopted in 1983 at the 6th Session of the CEMAT in Torremolinos, was incorporated into Recommendation (84) 2 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter
- the European Regional Planning Strategy presented at the 8th Session of the CEMAT in Lausanne in 1988
- the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent, adopted at the 12th Session of the CEMAT held in Hanover 2000 and incorporated into Recommendation (2002) 1 by the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent

The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) of CEMAT is responsible for the implementation of the activities of the Council of Europe in the field of spatial planning and sustainable and global development. It has met on a regular basis since 1970.

The mechanisms used for the development of these activities consist of a Ministerial Conference every 3 years, two seminars or conferences per year and two meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials per year. Since 2000, the CEMAT agenda has been dominated by the policy document entitled ‘Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent’, which was adopted in 2002 in Hanover and has been incorporated into Resolution (2002) 1, which includes a 10-point list of principles (Déjant-Pons, 2003). Since then, a number of activities, including conferences, seminars, and projects has taken place in order to

apply these principles. If the ESDP has been applied and used by CEMAT, then it has been through these principles and activities, on which we will report below.

Given the overlap between the Council of Europe and the EU, members tend to have a different appreciation and interest in CEMAT activities, with EU members prioritising EU activities. In the run-up to the EU enlargement in 2004 CEMAT profited from increased levels of interest in both existing and future EU members. After the enlargement process was completed, the new EU members in general become a little less interested as they had increasingly to focus on EU matters. As such, the focus of CEMAT is now moving further eastwards towards Russia and former Soviet republics that are now in a process of transformation, and where existing planning systems and principles are increasingly found to be less appropriate.

1.5.2 Relation between CEMAT and ESDP process and vice versa

In 1988 during its 8th meeting, in Lausanne the CEMAT adopted its 'European Regional Planning Strategy'. Interestingly, because they disliked the generally poor application of CEMAT agreements, it was at this meeting that the French minister Chérèque and his Dutch counterpart Nijpels decided to organise an informal ministerial meeting under the umbrella of the European Communities in order to start up a spatial planning process with more potential impact. This resulted in a meeting in 1989 under the French presidency of EU ministers responsible for spatial planning in Nantes, which as is known, saw the birth of a process that finally resulted in the adoption, in 1999, of the ESDP (Faludi and Waterhout, 2002).

The ESDP in turn has been a major source of inspiration for the CEMAT to develop and adopt the 'Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent', or in short: Guiding Principles. At the CEMAT conference of 1994 in Oslo resolutions passed on strategies for sustainable regional / spatial development in Europe beyond the year 2000. Three years later in Limassol a resolution passed which asked, while referring to the ESDP 'in the making', for the elaboration of a the guiding principles for sustainable and comprehensive spatial development in Europe in the next century. This resulted in the Guiding Principles document that was subsequently adopted in Hanover in 2000.

1.5.3 Role of ESDP in drafting Guiding Principles

As indicated in October 1997 in Limassol the CEMAT adopted a resolution to develop the Guiding Principles under German Presidency (from 1998-2000). The decision to develop such guidelines was inspired by the ESDP (i.e. the First Official Draft of the ESDP had been published four months

previously in June). The Germans hired a consultant to develop draft texts and issue them for each CSO (Committee of Senior Officials) meeting, which took place twice a year. This proved to be a successful approach.

As regards the contents of the Guiding Principles document, the 15 EU-members required it for obvious reasons to be in line, or at least compatible, with the ESDP. Furthermore the Guiding Principles had to be more flexible than the ESDP in order to be able to apply to the even more diverse territory covered by the Council of Europe.

During the drafting process the EU15 members (with some exceptions), were not particularly active in terms of contributing to it, as they were generally more concerned with the ESDP. Some EU 15 members did not even send representatives to CSO meetings, though most Central and Eastern European countries were represented. Germany held the Presidency of both the European Union and CEMAT, which placed it in a perfect position to guarantee coherence between the ESDP and the Guiding Principles (Selke and Müller, 2003). EU members showed more interest after the ESDP had been published as they recognised the importance of this exercise. No specific reference was however made to the ESDP during the CSO meetings. The ESDP was however used as the major source of inspiration in the drafting of the principles. The consultant used the ESDP as starting point. Thus, most ESDP principles were translated into the CEMAT document as well as much of the ESDP's terminology.

Note that the writing of the Guiding Principles only took two years, which is significantly less than the time needed to draft the ESDP. The explanation is twofold. First, the institutional context of the CEMAT is far less complex than that of the European Communities, since its policies cannot be binding nor influence other policies (the ESDP for instance could potentially have an influence on the structural funds). In addition, there was no dispute over competence, as there had been during the ESDP process between the European Commission and the EU-Member States. A second reason of course is that the Guiding Principles could be based on an existing policy text, the ESDP, on which there was consensus.

The Guiding Principles and the ESDP differ from each other on a number of points. In order to make a more concise and coherent document only 10 guiding principles have been developed, as opposed to the ESDP's 60 policy options. Another difference with the ESDP is the attempt within the Guiding Principles to differentiate between specific territorial categories such as coastal regions, mountain regions and border regions, and to translate the guiding principles for each of these categories. CEMAT's Guiding Principles also include the continental dimension of Europe as a specific challenge for spatial development policies. In short, the Guiding Principles are in complete conformity with the ESDP as they can be

regarded as a translation and elaboration of the ESDP in order to meet the requirements and needs of the larger and geographically more diverse area covered by the Council of Europe.

1.5.4 Application of ESDP and CEMAT Guidelines

Since its adoption, the CEMAT Guiding Principles have been the point of reference for all CEMAT activities. If the ESDP is being applied in Eastern European countries then this has to be interpreted as an indirect application via the CEMAT guiding principles. Some of the interviewees (see Annex 13) speak of the 'hidden application of the ESDP'. In terms of this project it seems apposite to speak of application by processes of secondary decision-making.

After the 12th CEMAT conference in 2000 in Hanover, several seminars have been organised each addressing a specific theme of the Guiding Principles (see Table 6). Clearly then, the topics are in line with the ESDP. The seminars have been used to elaborate them further and can thus be regarded as follow up activities of the Guiding Principles and thus of the ESDP. Note, however, that with time the planning context changes, resulting in new issues appearing on the agenda and the amending of old ones.

Although there is no evidence of the direct application of the ESDP, CEMAT remains relevant as a field where ESDP principles are being taken into account. In that sense it is interesting to note that CEMAT seems to be alive and kicking. The 13th CEMAT Conference held in Ljubljana in 2003, was one of the main political events in the context of sustainable spatial development and the implementation of the Guiding Principles (Jancic, 2003). A declaration was adopted on the territorial dimension of sustainable development (the Ljubljana Declaration). Portugal will host the 14th Session of the CEMAT in 2006. In 2004 and 2005, the Committee of Senior Officials of the CEMAT will prepare this conference devoted to the topic of 'Networks for sustainable spatial development – Building bridges across Europe'.

Table 6 CEMAT Seminars

Location date	Topic
Thessalonica, Greece, 25-26 June 2001	Integration of the greater European spaces
Lisbon, Portugal, 26-27 November 2001	Landscape heritage, spatial planning and sustainable development
Dresden, Germany, 15-16 May 2002	The role of local and regional authorities in transnational co-operation in the field of regional/spatial development
Sofia, Bulgaria, 23-24 October 2002	Spatial planning for the sustainable development of particular types of European areas: mountains, coastal zones, rural zones, flood-plains and alluvial valleys

Budapest, Hungary, 26-27 March 2003	Sustainable spatial development: strengthening inter-sectoral relations
Wroclaw, Poland, 30 June 2003	Natural disasters and sustainable spatial development: prevention of floods
Yerevan, Armenia, 28-29 October 2004	Spatial development governance: institutional co-operation networks
Strasbourg, France, 15 March 2005	The role of training in the implementation of the policy of sustainable spatial development in Europe
Moscow, Russian Federation, 26 September 2005	Networking for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent
Bled, Slovenia, 17-18 November 2005	Urban management in networking Europe

The CEMAT Guiding Principles plugged a gap in Central and Eastern European countries, which were at the time in transition. The new conditions presented by the re-emergence of the market economy and democracy combined with the initial attempts towards decentralisation created a completely new context for spatial planning, while a new generation of post-Soviet era professionals assumed the lead role in driving the process forward in Central and Eastern Europe. In this context, the CEMAT guiding principles, which have been translated into most languages, offered badly needed support.

Furthermore a number of projects are currently being carried out, with the effort to create a Pan-European Network being particularly noteworthy here. This concerns projects including the CEMAT Model Regions or the 'Regions of Innovation' project and the Tisza river basin co-operation project. The latter forms a pilot action area where a transnational working group is developing integrated transnational strategies based on an agreement between seven countries. It began as a bottom-up response to floods, pollution, and lagging economic development. The CEMAT Regions of Innovation project (see also TEAP action 3.1 above) combines a top-down and bottom-up approach in order to overcome transition. It is coordinated and financed by Germany (initially as part of the Tampere Action Programme action 3.1) and can be seen as the application of an ESDP concept, because the actors involved have also been involved in the ESDP process. It has to be noted however that the regional actors concerned, located as they are in Russia and Armenia, are not familiar with the ESDP (see for example, Müller, 2003). They do however refer to the Guiding Principles, which in this way form the stepping-stone between the ESDP and the project. Other initiatives and projects are carried out in the Alpine-Adriatic area and along the Danube and the River Prut.

1.5.5 Summary

Partly inspired by the ESDP process the CEMAT thus took the decision to develop the policy document on the 'Guiding Principles for Sustainable

Spatial Development of the European Continent'. The CEMAT Guiding Principles are essentially a more concise and coherent version of the ESDP, whose terminology is adopted and principles are further elaborated in order to address the needs of the Council of Europe's territory, which is a larger and more diverse area than that of the EU15.

The Guiding Principles have been positively received and have aroused interest in territorial issues in the CEMAT countries, in particular those outside the EU15, although the EU15 recognised the value of the CEMAT as a means to pave the way for EU-enlargement. CEMAT provided a more equal platform for discussing spatial planning issues than for instance the CSD+ (Committee on Spatial Development extended with delegations from the then-accession countries). The ESDP was not considered to be a 'European' spatial development perspective since it only addressed the needs of the EU15, whereas the other members of the Council of Europe had quite different spatial planning problems and needs. Hence CEMAT meetings and activities never refer to the ESDP.[31] The CEMAT Guiding Principles have thus plugged this gap, and act as the reference point for CEMAT activities.

The effects of the ESDP include changes in CEMAT 'policies' and CEMAT actors, partly also due to the fact that actors participate in both processes. CEMAT activities were intensified during the ESDP process and after publication of the Guiding Principles. This intensity has diminished since the enlargement of the EU in 2004. The result of this has been that the focus of CEMAT has moved eastwards to the 'neighbourhood' and future accession countries, who remain very interested in catching up with the territorial governance discourse as voiced in the ESDP and consequently in the Guiding Principles document.

In conclusion, the ESDP is applied in CEMAT activities through the Guiding Principles in an indirect and thus often 'hidden' way, via secondary decision-making processes. Interestingly, whereas the CEMAT Guiding Principles document forwards a message that is broadly consistent with the ESDP and its concepts, the CEMAT document has, as far as CEMAT activities are concerned, at the same time displaced attention to the ESDP.

[31] Note, however, that individual countries outside the EU15 use and apply the ESDP to a large extent.

1.6 Conclusions

The ESDP is a document that lays down principles and concepts but is very difficult to apply directly. The ESDP falls short on substance as one interviewee in the Commission put it. It attempts to address various levels of government but in so doing is very general and lacks specificity for any level of government. In practice, the ESDP is mainly used where it lends support to a specific policy or piece of legislation. In most other cases, the ESDP does not feature at all in policy documents or in the process of developing policy.

Most crosscutting concepts with a specific spatial dimension which appear in the ESDP, such as polycentric urban development, urban-rural partnership, parity of access to infrastructure and/or knowledge and management of the natural and cultural heritage, do not feature in any of the European Treaties and are not generally considered very important for policy. Crosscutting concepts such as equal opportunities or sustainable development that are enshrined in European Treaties are generally considered more important for policy, since they identify a competence for EU policy making. In addition, crosscutting issues that have an economic dimension, such as competitiveness or innovation, currently have more resonance with policy-makers and these concepts are found more often in policy documents. This has a direct connection with the current political emphasis of the Lisbon Strategy in Europe. The ESDP is now more than six years old and it is therefore hardly surprising that part of its content has been overtaken by new policy issues.

Although the ESDP is not that familiar to many of the European Commission DGs, there is some evidence of a growing policy discourse on the spatial dimension of policy, one of the underlying issues in the ESDP. This is however more an issue of conformity than of application: spatial policies are now considered more important but this is not as a consequence of the ESDP or its application. Unsurprisingly, the ESDP is most familiar in DG-Regional Policy, from where the document was primarily authored. The second and third reports on economic and social cohesion, for example make reference to the ESDP. So too do the Community guidelines for the INTERREG III Initiative.

Earlier drafts of the ESDP helped to give rise to Strand C (transnational cooperation) of the INTERREG II Initiative (which subsequently became INTERREG IIIB) and is the most closely related strand to the aims of the ESDP. This is therefore an example of the explicit application of the ESDP. Unsurprisingly then, the main priorities of most Strand IIIB Programmes are quite coherent with the ESDP policy guidelines. In some Strand IIIB programming areas, the programme priorities directly reflect the ESDP policy guidelines, whereas in other areas the programme priorities bear

much fewer similarities with the ESDP policy guidelines. There is no clear spatial or geographical divide according to conformity with the ESDP's policy guidelines. Looking at the importance of different concepts of the ESDP within Strand IIIB programming, funding is often skewed towards priorities concerning sustainable development, prudent management, and the protection of nature and cultural heritage. This is particularly so in respect of the programming areas that cover parts of southern Europe. For programming areas that cover parts of Northern Europe, funding is often more skewed towards priorities concerning the parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge. In all programming areas, funding is relatively more limited for priorities concerning the development of a balanced and polycentric urban system and a new urban-rural relationship.

Application of the ESDP through INTERREG can in the main be characterised as secondary or tertiary as there are various intermediate steps (and programming documents) between the ESDP and the implementation of INTERREG projects. In this context for instance we have the Community INTERREG guidelines, the Community Initiative Programmes, and the Operational Programmes. In addition to this we also have the procedures for funding allocation and project selection. All of these stages may mean that the translation of the ESDP and the key concepts within the document into practical projects is indirect at best, while certain messages or concepts from within the ESDP are inevitably lost along the way. On the other hand, however, some Programming Areas made ESDP conformity an eligibility and selection criterion, and thus establish a direct link between the ESDP and the contents of projects. The result therefore is mixed. Whereas, on the one hand, the causal link between the ESDP and projects may sometimes be very indirect with two or more steps in between, the link is sometimes virtually direct i.e. some ESDP concepts have been directly used to define measures and projects).

The aim of the Tampere ESDP Action Programme (TEAP) was to show how to apply the ESDP soon after it was published. As such, the programme can be seen as a direct application of the ESDP messages, with 8 actions deriving directly from it (see Annex 12). In practice however the way in which the actions were realised did not maintain a close link with the ESDP and with the TEAP as a whole. Actions also emanated from existing projects or from the intentions of Member States, and for which the TEAP was used as a means to bestow legitimacy. Some actions were never completed, while others took a different direction to those originally agreed. A number of circumstances were influential here, most notably the loss of the monitoring and coordination function in 2001 ensured by the Committee on Spatial Development (CSD) with the result that the organisational foundation of the TEAP was seriously undermined. From

then on, a number of individual actions took their own path without the opportunity for discussion or to efficiently associate the relevant partners. The TEAP process became less visible and this probably generated weaker commitment, although on occasions involved partners recalled their interest in it.

Paradoxically, the successful implementation of one of the TEAP actions, namely, establishing the European Spatial Observation Network (ESPON) cooperation, probably overshadowed many of the other TEAP actions. As it demanded much of the attention (and resources) of the parties involved, it is plausible that resources and energy were re-allocated as a consequence. In addition, the consequences of European enlargement for the TEAP process had not really been foreseen. The involvement of the then candidate countries was given an initial impulse with the first (and last) meeting of the CSD+ mid-2001 but quickly dissipated. As enlargement became one of the main issues at stake, this probably generated an implicit feeling that the TEAP was no longer in line with the current context.

The decision to develop CEMAT's Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent was inspired by the ESDP process. The document itself is essentially a more concise and coherent version of the ESDP: it is the result of a quite different process compared to the development of the ESDP. CEMAT's Guiding Principles are one example of the direct application of the ESDP. The CEMAT Guiding Principles were positively received and aroused interest in territorial issues in CEMAT countries, particularly outside the EU15. Within the EU15, the value of the CEMAT document was seen as a means to pave the way for EU-enlargement. CEMAT provided a more equal platform for discussing spatial planning issues than for instance the Committee on Spatial Development extended with delegations of the then-accession countries. Outside the EU15, the ESDP was not considered to be a truly 'European' spatial development perspective since it only addressed the needs of the EU15: other members of the Council of Europe had quite different spatial planning problems and needs. Hence CEMAT meetings and activities never explicitly referred to the ESDP.[32] The Guiding Principles are being widely used and applied in CEMAT activities and thus it may be concluded that the ESDP is also being applied, albeit via secondary decision-making processes.

The effects of the ESDP include changes in CEMAT 'policies' and CEMAT actors, partly also due to the fact that actors participate in both processes. CEMAT activities were intensified during the ESDP process and after publication of the Guiding Principles. This intensity has diminished since

[32] Note, however, that individual countries outside the EU15 use and apply the ESDP to a large extent.

enlargement of the EU. The result is that the focus of CEMAT has moved further east towards 'neighbourhood' and future accession countries, interested in catching up with the territorial governance discourse in the ESDP, and subsequently in the Guiding Principles document. Interestingly, whereas the CEMAT Guiding Principles document puts forward a message that is broadly consistent with the ESDP and its concepts, the CEMAT document has, as far as CEMAT activities are concerned, at the same time displaced attention to the ESDP.

In summary, the ESDP has been applied at the pan-European level in a number of different ways, including European policy, the Community INTERREG Initiative, the Tampere ESDP Action Programme and the CEMAT Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development. Some of which were however more successful than others. The Community INTERREG Initiative and the CEMAT Guiding Principles document are the more successful examples of application as compared to European sectoral policy and the Tampere ESDP Action Programme, at least in terms of the translation of concepts themes and continuity.

The application of the ESDP at the EU level, just as at other levels, is institutionally complex and sometimes messy – it is then not always a straightforward process, as might rationally be assumed or as could be interpreted from the ESDP's diagrammatic representation of the process. In the case of the European Commission, for example, there is heterogeneity between directorates: they each have somewhat different interests and priorities. Consequently, the application of the ESDP and the horizontal integration of policy is not easy. In general, the process of drafting European policy remains very sectoral. Some cross-sectoral input is provided via consultation but this is mainly done in a reactive rather than in a proactive manner.

2 ESDP application in the Member States

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Technical review

In all, 29 country reports were performed. Each national report consists of a comparable national study and an indicator collection. The research methods in the main consisted of analyses of spatial planning policy documents and interviews with key experts.

In the interests of consistency (in terms of the research approaches used in the overall project), guidelines for the national reports and case studies were developed and circulated to the TPG members. The guidelines also tried to ensure that the questions raised by the working hypotheses were addressed.

The guidelines aimed at identifying the main differences concerning the application and effects of the ESDP throughout the ESPON space. The assumption being that ESDP application is largely framed and dominated by the national policy systems, both in terms of policies and their focus and institutional settings relating to the vertical and horizontal division of labour and responsibilities. The country studies mainly focused on investigating:

a. the administrative level of ESDP application

b. the main policy sector(s) in which the application is taking place

c. the degree and focus of application, i.e. which ESDP aims and concepts are used

The guidelines can be found in Annex 2.

Chapter 2 contains the initial results of the, mainly qualitative, analysis of the national studies. Some of the questions in the guidelines - where the national experts are asked to fill out score schemes - did not function because the questions were misunderstood or were not filled out. These questions will be reconsidered during the next period. One fundamental problem here is however that the level of knowledge in respect of the ESDP is low, even among national experts.

2.1.2 Institutional / Receiving context

National planning systems in Europe can be categorised into four different regional planning perspectives making it possible to distinguish between the North-western, the British, the Nordic and the Mediterranean. These perspectives were analysed in chapter 4 of the First Interim Report based on the scientific literature.

According to these four perspectives a possible hypothesis could be that there is a relation, albeit a non-linear one, between the experienced types of ESDP application and the existing European planning traditions, e.g. the four regional perspectives. Seen from the point of view of the 2005 national reports however there appears to be little relation between the application of the ESDP and the four European regional planning perspectives.

As the ESDP was to some extent based on planning policies already existent in the planning systems of the countries that gave birth to this perspective, namely France, Germany and the Netherlands it is not surprising that its impact was not particularly noteworthy in these countries. On the other hand, for the remaining countries and for the new Member States in particular, the ESDP and the application process undoubtedly influenced the development of new planning systems and institutions. This hypothesis can be confirmed to some degree. The influence of the ESDP can be related to the role in the ESDP process and not least to the level of the interest in being a part of the EU in the new Member States. Denmark, the UK, Ireland, Sweden, Portugal, and Greece also seem to have been affected by the ESDP leading to changes in national policies.

In new Member States, such as Romania, Slovenia, Latvia, and Lithuania the legislative framework has been affected by policies embedded in the ESDP. The reason for this should perhaps be reviewed in the context of the strategies of these countries for becoming well-integrated members in the EU. Moreover, the ESDP has also led to significant impacts in the institutional structures in Hungary, Latvia, and Romania in particular.

The national experts were asked to report whether any major trends had affected spatial planning during the application process. Few countries were able to report such trends. Experts in France, Germany, Ireland, Portugal, and Greece however reported increasing spatial polarisation between e.g. successful metropolitan areas and rural areas with problems in maintaining public service levels.

The North-western Planning Perspective

- In general both centralising and decentralising processes can be observed. National planning systems are developing in a more spatially oriented development direction.
- **Luxemburg** 1999, a change in the organisation of spatial planning administration provides for the better integration of regional and local spatial planning.
- **Germany** 2004, planning legislation was revised and amended. In general, the creation of city networks and formation of city regions can be observed.
- **The Netherlands** 2007, new act implements a shift from restrictive land-use and preservation measures to a more spatially oriented and decentralised development system.
- **France,** a number of changes addressing e.g. social segregation in the cities and coastal zone planning have been carried through since 1999.

The British Planning Perspective

- In general, national planning systems are developing in a more spatially oriented development direction.
- **Ireland** 2000, a new comprehensive 3-tier planning system with distinctive regional and national levels.

The Nordic Planning Perspective

- In general, systems are currently under review resulting in more spatially oriented planning systems in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.
- **Denmark** 2000, land use oriented municipal planning is amended in a more strategic and developmental direction.
- **Denmark** 2007, a new planning act introduces a new concept of regional planning – more development oriented but less land use regulatory and less sector policy integrative

The Mediterranean Perspective

- **Greece, Portugal, and Spain,** in general, better integration of environmental policies in planning systems since the 1990s.
- **Italy,** in general, a more collaborative approach together with a decentralisation of power from the state to the regional and local levels.

Eastern New Member States

- Before 1990, the centrally planned economies utilised both annual and 5-year plans together with sectoral programmes. Spatial planning was subordinated or parallel to sectoral policies.
- **Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, and Poland:** new systems have been in development since 1990s. Power has been decentralised especially to the local level. The new systems still suffer from a lack of coordination between economic development, physical planning, and sectoral programmes.
- **Slovak Republic,** decentralisation of power to regional and local level since early 1990s. Regional policy undergoing a process of innovation.
- **Czech Republic** 2007, new system under preparation where land-use, with urban design and building regulation still the dominant planning approach.

Western New Member States

- **Malta** 2000, revision of the planning system which is a single tier system with some integrative elements

Non Member States

- **Bulgaria 2001,** new planning act, and from 2004, a new regional development act

Table 7 Major changes in European planning systems since 1999

2.1.3 Involvement in the ESDP's Construction

In the First Interim Report it was stated that France, The Netherlands and Germany were the Member States that, more than any others, have sustained, promoted and shaped the whole ESDP process to the point where the ESDP is usually said to represent a distinctly Northwest European perspective on spatial planning.

Other countries however also played significant roles as contributors in the process. Belgium for instance was a force in the process where the very decision was taken to produce the ESDP at the ministerial meeting in Liège in 1993, while Luxembourg took the initiative to manage the administrative tasks in respect of ESPON from 2002.

The United Kingdom changed its attitude towards the European Union after 1997 under the new Labour government and organised the Glasgow meeting where "the complete draft" of the document was presented in 1998.

The Nordic Countries should also be mentioned in connection with the developing the spatial planning perspective VASAB (Visions and Strategies Around the Baltic Sea 2010 from 1994), which ran in parallel to the ESDP process. The Nordic Countries, Germany, Poland, and the Baltic States all participated in this forum.

Denmark could potentially also be highlighted as the first country to apply the principles of the ESDP, as early as 1992, to their own national planning policy.

Finland, together with Sweden, joined the EU in 1995 and subsequently organised the Tampere meeting in 1999, which came to be regarded as a milestone in the application process.

The Mediterranean countries have also been partners in the process. Under the Italian presidency, in 1996, the theme of *cultural heritage* was integrated into the ESDP.

Map 2 Countries' role in the ESDP process



2.2 Levels

2.2.1 Application of the ESDP has taken place at the national level

In the vast majority of cases, *the national level* is the most important in respect of ESDP application. This is not surprising, since the individual participants in the original ESDP process came from within the various national ministries. Moreover, it is also at this level where the issue of international positioning is most often dealt with. A majority of countries do have a national spatial planning policy with legislative or other regulatory support, and these issues are among the responsibilities reserved to the national level.

One example here is that of Denmark, where national spatial planning reports are regularly published. The focus of these reports changes over time, and as such, the ESDP may not actually be mentioned. Nevertheless, similar concepts paralleling the main topics of the ESDP have been raised in this context. Germany has a strong European orientation and does have direct references to the ESDP in its national planning documents. Greece adopted a new law on spatial development in 1999 with many of the same general aims as the ESDP, and in both the UK and the Netherlands, the planning systems had a similar orientation from the outset. In all of these cases one may argue that the coincidence of topics in national planning and in the ESDP reflected a European-wide policy debate, and thus that both the ESDP and the national documents are products of the same debate rather than the expression of a unidirectional process of influence from one level to another.

Other countries were in the middle of changing their planning systems during the period when the ESDP was undergoing development or shortly thereafter, and they thus had the opportunity to directly seek inspiration in it. One example here is that of Lithuania, where a new national plan was published in 2002.

The ESDP is explicitly mentioned in national level policy statements in Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Slovenia and the UK, while four other countries also report that there now is a legal basis for ESDP-style planning: Romania, Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovakia.

For five countries, *the regional level* has been the most important in terms of ESDP application: Austria, Belgium, Italy, Norway, and Spain. Austria and Belgium are federal countries with the regional level being the driver in terms of spatial policies. In Austria, there is no evidence of ESDP application at the national level, while there is a clear coincidence of policy development in the *länder* even if direct references to the ESDP are lacking. Similarly, in Belgium, spatial planning responsibilities are located

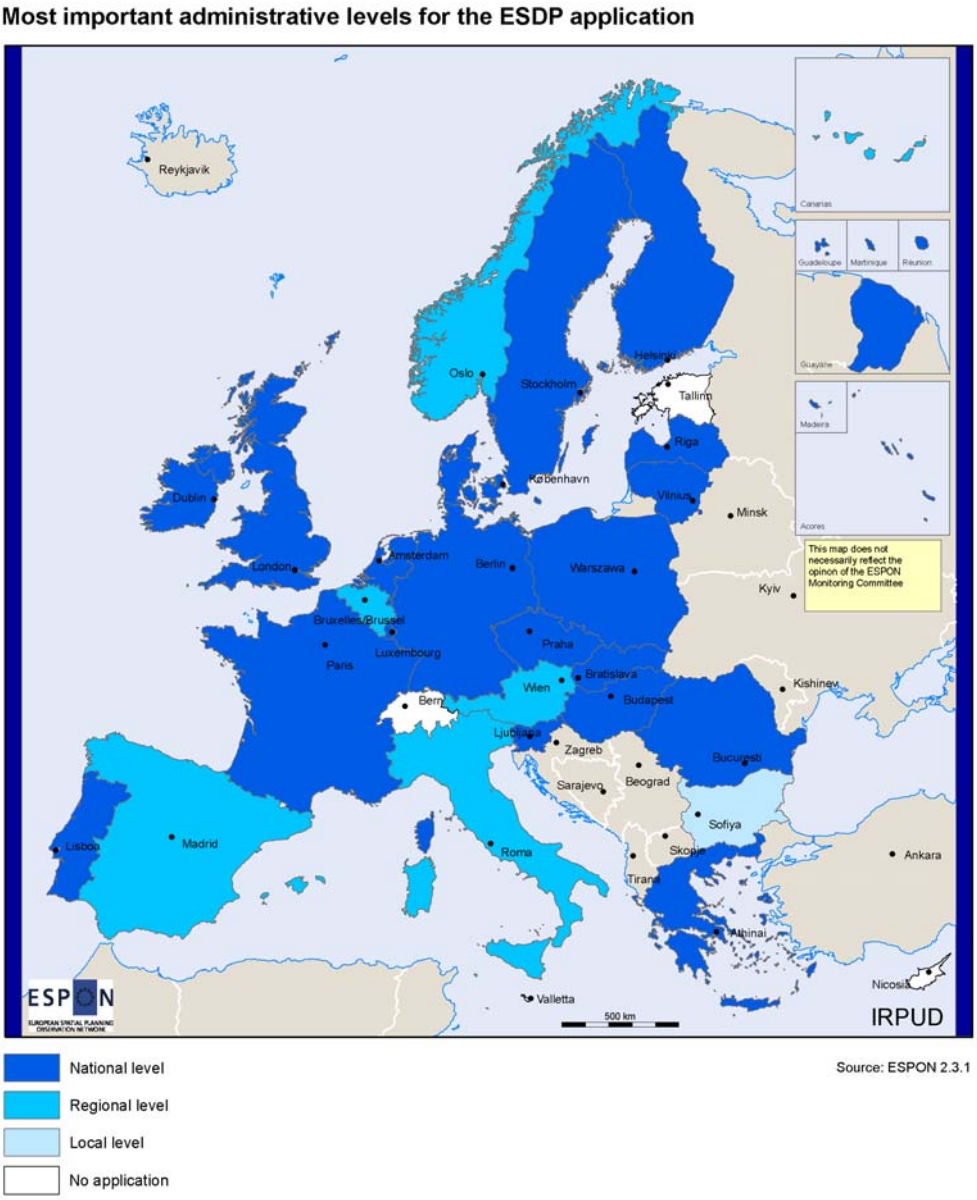
at the regional level. While Belgium and Italy both have strong regions, and there are however significant differences between them regarding ESDP uptake. Italy was active in the ESDP process, but its participation was not well anchored within those agencies responsible for spatial planning and as a result, the national level has been less important in terms of ESDP application. In Norway, as a non-member state, the relevant ministries were not party to the development of ESDP. The dissemination of the notion of polycentricity instead came through the academic world and a consultancy report commissioned by an individual region. Spatial development is a competence held at the level of the autonomous regions in Spain, and there are several examples of explicit ESDP references in recent regional legislation regarding spatial planning.

Bulgaria reports that the local level is most important, as physical planning is the responsibility of the municipalities and settlements, while spatial planning at the regional level is only now under development. There is however no evidence available of direct ESDP application at the local level.

Table 8 Most important administrative levels for ESDP application

	Most important level	Second most important level
National level	19	2
Regional level	5	18
Local level	1	5
No application	4	4
Total	29	29

Map 3 Most important administrative levels for EDSP application



The regional level is the *second* most important level for ESDP application. Regions, (*länder*, counties or provinces etc), can however be of vastly differing sizes and there is therefore a significant variation regarding their responsibilities in terms of spatial planning. Spatial planning is a regional responsibility in most large countries and federal states. Regional policies are however enacted even in the smaller countries, and for many there is a link between spatial planning and regional policy, which makes the regional level interesting when it comes to the actual means for implementing spatial plans.

2.3 Effects

2.3.1 Changes in planning discourses came first

The national experts were asked to assess in which fields the ideas of the ESDP was *first* used. Logically, one would expect the planning discourse to be affected first, since the ESDP was a more than 10 -year -long process. The ideas and perspectives matured over time, and thereafter the legislation and institutional system could be adjusted (if necessary) and the planning practices amended or changed.

This line of development seems to be confirmed in several countries. In Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, and Slovenia the planning discourse was first affected and as a part of that there were changes in spatial representation, i.e. images and maps showing the country's place in a wider Europe.

Development would then depend upon the enthusiasm of leading people and on the degree of matching between national policy development and European policy development: we would therefore expect to see an explicit use of ESDP if that served the purposes of the main national interests within spatial development; otherwise this would be less likely. The Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, and Spain all report that the planning discourse was influenced first, and thereafter the planning policies followed.

The degree of ESDP inspiration within such national processes leading to institutional changes generally depends upon coincidences in timing – if a change was going to take place anyway, arguments emanating from within the European professional debate could then be used, as long as they provided support for the particular form of reorganisation in question. In some countries however, institutional changes seem to have emerged before the ESDP had time to influence the situation. These changes however appeared in different ways. In Hungary and Latvia, a new set of planning institutions was set up as a precondition for institutional reforms. In Italy the reformation of the constitution led to the strengthening of the regional level through the inclusion of European ideas as a backdrop to it -

even if the ESDP as such cannot claim to have had a major influence in this process. In the Netherlands, an International Affairs Unit was set up within the Directorate-General of Spatial Policy in response to developments in the increasingly international discussion of this field.

The ESDP is not a binding document. Nevertheless it may have had a role in the reorganisation of national institutional systems in the process of adapting to EU rules and regulations, particularly in cases where new legal or administrative structures have been established. The situation in respect of Romania for example points in this direction.

2.3.2 Changes in institutions and policies would potentially have most impact

In general, the impact of the ESDP is very limited in most countries. When asked to rank the importance of different categories of impacts, about half failed to rank *any* possible field of action as important.

The most influential impact would of course be if planning practices were changed due to influence from the ESDP. Only in one country however, namely, Luxembourg, was a significant change in practices reported. This was when the new law on spatial planning led to wider participation from various sectors and levels and more dialogue processes.

The long-term effects of institutional changes and changes in policies/practices can of course be very important in countries where such changes have taken place, since they entail long-term influence. One example here is that of Hungary, where the new institutions are now 'up and running' and over time they will gradually renew the whole planning system. In Latvia, a new institutional structure was established on both the national and the regional levels, demonstrating an indirect application of some of the ESDPs policy aims and options. A third example here is that of Romania, where the new law on territorial development has the same goals as the ESDP.

A general observation here is that none of the countries that led the ESDP process have reported experiencing any particular influence from the document on their own planning systems or practices.

2.3.3 More references to the ESDP at the time of publishing

In most countries, the impact of the ESDP has been modest in terms of its direct presence in planning documents. In general, references to the ESDP are more numerous around the date of its official delivery between 1997 and 1999. The interest in, and application of, the ESDP is mostly dependent on the work of the various countries' own regional plans and in

particular relates to whether these plans were both ‘timely’ and in line with the ESDP process.

After the appearance of a number of general ESDP-related references throughout their planning documents during the period 1997-99, several countries such as Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Romania, and Switzerland, thereafter witnessed a fading level of interest in the application of ESDP ideas. Planning documents processed at that time highlight this general lack of interest by no longer referring to the ESDP documents. In Denmark, interest in, and reference to the ESDP grew substantially during the 1990s. The references to the ESDP on national planning remained in the first national planning report of the new millennium, issued in 2000, even though the previous report from 1997 had a stronger European perspective. The recent National Planning Report from 2003 however contains no reference to the ESDP at all. The focus of this document is on internal conditions with the European perspective being very modest.

In contrast, for several new Member States the ESDP started to influence spatial planning immediately after its publication in 1999. The Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovenia are examples of countries that did not participate in the drafting process, but were nevertheless influenced at a later stage.

Several countries point out that the ESDP perspective will however become more prominent in a number of forthcoming national planning reports and that the aim is to take a more active role in the discussion and reformulation of ESDP guidelines, i.e. Denmark, Germany, and Sweden.

Another way of perceiving the future influence of the ESDP is to see it as a more integrated part of the planning system. In Luxembourg for example, it has more difficult to detect direct ESDP influence. This does not necessarily mean that the ESDP is no longer considered relevant. Rather, it suggests that its principles have been appropriated and integrated into the relevant national-level policies.

Some countries point out that ESDP ideas did not have any impact at all; these are mostly new Member States such as, Cyprus, Estonia, and Malta. In Cyprus, the approach to spatial planning comes nearer to the principles of the ESDP but this is mainly the result of the ongoing general process of Europeanization. In addition, a number of older Member States, such as Austria and Belgium (referring in particular to the Flemish region), point out that the ESDP did not have any effect on their spatial planning systems.

2.3.4 Impacts/effects of the ESDP document over space

Nearly half of the countries report regional differences in terms of ESDP influence. The factors that influence the degree or intensity of application relate to the relative position of the region in Europe, i.e. participation in cross-border programmes such as INTERREG IIIA, but also to the attitudes of key individuals in the planning process and to the timing of plan production.

In Belgium for example, the impact in the Walloon region is more substantial than in either Flanders or Brussels. The level of interest shown in the Walloon region is part of a more general interest for policy development on the European level. The same discussion has taken place in Germany where the West German *länder* have a longer experience of EU co-operation and territorial policy processes more generally and might therefore be more advanced in respect to the ESDP. Meanwhile, the East German *Länder,* though starting from a much lower basis, have since enlargement become increasingly involved in co-operation. Italy also sees significant regional differences in this respect, and highlights the north-central regions as being more engaged in the process of renewing policy tools, while the southern ones continue to suffer from a technical and cultural lag in planning activities. With respect to the question of polycentricism some sparse references can be found in various regional planning documents: e.g. Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany. Among the group of up-to-date regions, Emilia-Romagna plays a leading role.

In Slovenia, the strongest impact of the ESDP is to be found in urban areas of large and medium-sized cities where interest in international activities has had the most significant effects at the national level. Similarly, some border regions have also witnessed an increasing level of interest in ESDP issues.

Other countries have not generally experienced any significant regional differences, i.e., Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, and Slovakia. Several (but not all) of these countries are relatively small and have a less developed regional level than larger or federally organised countries. In Lithuania there is no variation within the country but at the same time it is assumed that there is a more significant ESDP impact in the fast growing municipalities, which have to deal with issues relating to land use pressure.

2.4 Actors

2.4.1 Ministries are the most important “agents” for ESDP application

For most countries, e.g. Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Romania, and Ireland, the main responsibility for ESDP application is located to the national level, usually the ministry responsible for spatial planning. For example, in Denmark the Spatial Planning Department of the Ministry of Environment was the only organisation responsible for the application of the ESDP, while in Austria, the Federal Chancellery has been active in the process of elaborating and promoting the ESDP.

In other countries, the degree of ESDP application is low at the national level. Here regional actors are responsible for ESDP application, i.e. regional councils as is the case in Finland. In Belgium, responsibility for ESDP application is handled differently among the three regions, in the Flemish region the debate was restricted to the relevant sector departments, the Association of Flemish Provinces, the Association of Flemish cities, municipalities, and the Association of Flemish Planners. In the Walloon region, the main actors for application were the regional spatial planning authorities and the regional administration. In the Brussels-Capital region, ESDP application was undertaken in a similar way to that of the Walloon region, except that application was even more limited to a small number of spatial planning actors. In Spain, application is stronger at the regional level due to the limited amount of people working in the SDU, the only department at the ministerial level following the ESDP and CEMAT processes.

The role of the CSD/SUD in the application process is also mentioned as being important in countries such as Greece and Ireland.

2.4.2 Dissemination of the ESDP document to a limited number of key actors

Even though the ESDP document has been disseminated to key actors through a variety of different formal and informal mechanisms, the ESDP ideas generally remained tied within a small circle of key actors. In Italy for example, ESDP ideas are referred to as “toys for the few”. A similar remark was made in the Netherlands where, in spite of all of the activities and mechanisms created to disseminate the ESDP, even now, only a limited number of people know of it. This is not necessarily the fault of those seeking to undertake the task of dissemination, but rather relates to the fact that those who knew about the ESDP did not consider it

interesting or important enough to legitimise policy changes and impact on budget allocations.

The state is most commonly the actor through which the document has been disseminated in most countries. In France, the main method of dissemination has been through the central state apparatus. In Norway the officials at the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, as well as those of the Ministry of Environment have plans to initiate a national programme to disseminate the results of ESPON, meaning that the information on the ESDP would be actively disseminated for the for the time.

In several countries, key actors came to know about the document through their first-hand involvement in its construction.

In Finland, the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of the Interior prepared and held meetings in the process of making the document. Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, and the UK also adopted this approach to dissemination.

Another approach to the dissemination of the ESDP document is through the CSD/SUD. In the Netherlands, the Dutch CSD delegates and their close colleagues are the key actors in promoting the ESDP. Switzerland and Norway also mention the role of the CSD/SUD in the context of dissemination.

Additional approaches mentioned in several countries include the use of seminars, conferences, and dissemination to different actors such as regional councils. The documents have been discussed and distributed at seminars, while numerous meetings have been organised. In Portugal, the Portuguese National Administration organised seminars of which each one of the five administrative regions, as well as the Azores and Madeira, attended. These regional events were also attended by members of each Regional co-ordination Commission and by a selection of regional, economic, academic, and political actors.

Participation in INTERREG programmes is also a source of dissemination for the ESDP document. For example in Belgium where awareness remains low for most key actors, except for the regional spatial planning administration and for a number of other actors (sectoral administrations, NGO’s, consultative organs, scientific organs) that have heard about the ESDP through participation in European programmes such as INTERREG.

2.4.3 Best awareness of the ESDP at the national level

The national experts were asked to rank the level of awareness of the ESDP's contents among professionals (3=good knowledge about the whole document, 1=total unawareness)

On the national level there is generally a good level of knowledge of the whole project even though it is mostly limited to a few persons. The level of knowledge of the ESDP decreases at the regional and even more so at the local level.

In the Italian national report the rather ineffective way in which Italy participated in the ESDP drafting process was highlighted. The national representative is not part of the main spatial planning agency, which effectively limited the dissemination of the document.

In Luxembourg, on the other hand, awareness is good at national and regional levels due to the presence of the ESDP in the main national spatial planning document, which is taken as the reference for spatial development. For the same reason, and given the involvement of a number of municipalities in cross-border programmes and projects, there is probably a fair level of awareness at the local level.

In the Netherlands, national and regional level awareness of the ESDP have been ranked as intermediate since knowledge is restricted to a very limited number of people. At the national level, however the ESDP has been heard of by the majority of the officials at the Department of Spatial Planning but by no more than a handful of officials in the other relevant departments and ministries. At the provincial level, the same applies, as only a very limited level of knowledge about the ESDP exists at the local level.

Table 9 The awareness of the ESDP contents among professionals at the different levels in each country

(3=good knowledge about the whole document, 1=total unawareness)

Score	***National level***
Good knowledge	Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland
Intermediate	Cyprus, Denmark, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Spain, UK
Total unawareness	Belgium, Latvia
Score	***Regional level***
Good knowledge	Germany, Italy, Latvia, Poland
Intermediate	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK
Total unawareness	Cyprus, Denmark, Slovenia, Malta
Score	***Local level***
Good knowledge	–
Intermediate	Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain
Total unawareness	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, UK

2.5 Means of application

National experts were asked to rank the means of application according to their importance. This question was however interpreted rather differently by the countries concerned, making this assessment impossible. By focussing on the frequency that different means of application have had on the process of the adoption of the various aims and policies existent in the ESDP it is possible to draw a few conclusions. Firstly, the national studies revealed that cross-border co-operation, transnational cooperation, and the Structural Funds are the main means of ESDP application. It is also clear that the Tampere ESDP Action Programme and Urban Governance have played only a minor role here being recognised in only ten and nine countries respectively.

The process of the adoption of aims and policies in national planning systems is rather multifaceted, involving several means simultaneously. According to Table 10, every country has its own set of means and it is seldom that all coincide together in a single country, with the exception of Finland and France. Perhaps this explains the difficulty in ranking single means in the national studies.

In chapter 3, the application of the ESDP is better illustrated by examples.

Table 10 Frequency; means of application mentioned in national studies[33]

Country	TEAP	Cross-border co-operation	Transnational co-operation	Structural Funds	Urban governance
Austria		x	x	x	x
Belgium			x	x	x
Bulgaria		x		x	x
Cyprus			x		x
Czech Republic			x	x	
Denmark		x			
Estonia		x			
Finland	x	x	x	x	x
France	x	x	x	x	x
Germany	x	x	x	x	
Greece	x	x	x	x	
Hungary		x		x	
Irish Republic	x	x	x	x	
Italy		x	x		
Latvia		x	x	x	x
Lithuania	x	x			
Luxembourg	x	x	x	x	
Malta		x	x	x	
Netherlands	x		x	x	
Norway		x	x	x	
Poland		x	x	x	
Portugal		x	x	x	x
Romania			x	x	
Slovakia			-	-	-
Slovenia		x	x	x	
Spain	x	x			
Sweden		x	x	x	x
Switzerland			x	x	
United Kingdom	x	x			
Frequency	10	22	21	20	9

[33] Each expert was asked to rank the means of application according to their importance for the application of the ESDP in the country concern (1=the least important – 6=the most important – 0=no importance). The question was interpreted differently making the overall ranking impossible to analyse. From the answers received, we could however tell whether each mean of application had "been used" in each country. By substituting numbers with crosses and looking at the frequency of the means used by countries, it was possible to draw a few reliable conclusions.

2.6 Convergence /coherence with the ESDP from the outset

Four countries report that there is no ESDP application whatsoever. These countries are Cyprus, Estonia, Malta, and Switzerland.

The dominant mode of applying the principles of the ESDP is indirect in nature. There is no country in which the ESDP alone has led to changes, since policies are to some degree already coherent with those existing in most of the planning systems in Europe. Not least in the new Member States, this level of conformity is still recognized as mainly implicit.

The countries that played a leading role in the development of the ESDP e.g. Germany and The Netherlands claim that the ESDP was worked out in-line with core German or Dutch planning principles. As such, the objectives and goals of these national systems are generally in-line with ESDP goals. These countries (plus France) have frequently – even before the ESDP-process began – worked out national overviews and reports addressing the spatial situation and trends.

It is worth taking a closer look at the Dutch case as the application of the ESDP has been defined as being in "conformity without performance". In the Netherlands there is, except for two issues, conformity with the ESDP but without the ESDP having performed as a framework for decision-making. The Dutch expert pointed out that another explanation for the limited role of the ESDP in decision-making in the Netherlands is its vague and inconsistent contents and political tensions at the national level between the spatial planning agency and the sector ministries.

In Germany, the ESDP has been considered as almost not promoting changes in spatial planning policies despite the fact that it has been partly used to insert a number of spatial planning ideas into the wider national debate.

The same situation can be found in United Kingdom, where it is pointed out that the ESDP did have some influence on the UK debate after the document was launched in 1999, as regional planning was given greater prominence in the planning-hierarchy.

In the Nordic Countries "many elements in the national planning systems were in-line" before the ESDP, even though only Denmark and Finland practice spatial planning at the national level. In fact, Denmark published a national planning report where the "early ESDP-principles" were transformed and interpreted in a domestic context in 1992.

In the Mediterranean Countries, both Spain and Portugal had by 2000 worked out national plans where ESDP-principles were visible. In Greece, the ESDP-principles have had a catalytic function in the development of a new spatial planning system during the period 1994 – 2000.

In New Member States such as Latvia, the Czech Republic, and Poland, the ESDP-principles have directly influenced the formation of new planning laws. In others, the ESDP-principles have coloured national planning e.g. the Spatial Development Strategy for Slovenia.

In Cyprus and Estonia, changes in planning policies occurred as much in spite of as because of the ESDP. For instance, in Estonia similarities between the ideas in the National Spatial Plan (2001) and those in the ESDP are addressed to the implementation of the VASAB. The ESDP and the VASAB documents are interrelated, while also having quite coherent objectives. Many of these ideas have also been indirectly imported into the Estonian planning system from the Nordic countries such as Finland.

In the context of the explicit application of the ESDP, it is interesting that in the case of Luxemburg, the ESDP is taken into account not only in the matter of content, objectives, and options, but also in terms of process. The ESDP is not necessarily, however the main cause of change and coherence in spatial planning policies more generally. In fact, the ESDP is simply one factor among many that has promoted change in spatial planning policy. This case also demonstrates that explicit reference to the ESDP is not dependent on the Structural Funds alone, although the Structural Funds are a useful means of supporting the spatial distribution of spatial policy.

2.7 Ways: Vertical and horizontal integration

The attempt to identify those ESDP concepts applied by the countries included in this study has not provided a clear picture. For instance, when trying to define the impact of the ESDP there is some evidence that vertical integration is the most important. There is no common trend whatsoever among planning perspectives with regard to the application of variants of the spatial approach of the ESDP. According to the country experts, the impact on vertical integration has been most significant in Hungary, Slovenia, Sweden, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, and Luxemburg. In terms of horizontal integration, Italy, Portugal, Germany, Lithuania, and Luxemburg have however witnessed the greatest impacts.

As expected, vertical integration is a fundamental principle in planning terms among the old EU Member States, for instance the Netherlands and Germany, as well as among New Member States in Eastern Europe. In the Netherlands and Germany, various mechanisms exist for vertical and horizontal co-ordination as well as for spatial integration. For the Netherlands, it could be argued that the ESDP has indirectly contributed to a certain degree to vertical integration. As a result of INTERREIIC/IIIB, a programme that could be interpreted as a instrument inspired by the ESDP process, the so-called National Advisory Commission, in which the representatives of the Ministries of Spatial Planning and Economic Affairs,

the provinces, and water board representatives, has been set-up to decide upon the Dutch position with regard to INTERREG IIIB project proposals. This kind of close co-operation on European territorial development issues is unique, and adds to the already exiting formal and informal vertical integration mechanisms.

With regard to the Eastern European new Member States, such as Hungary for instance, vertical integration traditionally provided the core model in respect of centralized planning systems. Vertical integration indeed remains obligatory in the preparation of National Plans and operational programmes in Hungary. On the other hand, Horizontal integration is still rather weak, as co-operation between the agencies responsible for sectoral and spatial policies has not yet been achieved to the level expected.

Horizontal integration appears in many cases more difficult to attain, and therefore it has become an important issue on the agenda of many countries. The application of the effects of the ESDP on horizontal integration has for instance been central in Slovenia. Horizontal integration has also been positively influenced by the creation of new strategic documents in different sectors. There is however evidence that this development is mainly a consequence of the demands and interests of economic and political players rather than a direct consequence of spatial integration processes *per se*.

Another example in which horizontal integration is seen as being important is that of Portugal. In fact, horizontal integration is considered here as an indispensable process of the application of the ESDP since co-operation between sectors is often hindered by strong inter-ministerial competition and a public administration culture unaccustomed to such approaches.

2.8 Themes: Policy aims and policy options

2.8.1 Spatial planning is the leading policy sector for ESDP application

The ESDP is used in most countries within *spatial planning* only, at all geographical levels – national, regional, and local. There are only a few examples of other policy sectors that are regarded as important for ESDP application.

For Belgium (Walloon and Brussels) and Sweden, the *transport sector* is the most important at the national level. In both cases, there is no spatial planning at the national level. The transport sector does then become important for spatial planning, in Belgium because the federal level does have competencies regarding Trans-European Networks (high-speed-

trains), and in Sweden because policies for polycentricity are implemented as part of the transport sector.

It may be somewhat surprising that only one country, Hungary, identifies the *regional development policy* sector as the most important for ESDP application at the national level – even if this sector has both the means and the measures for policy implementation. This is probably a reflection of the fact that spatial planning and regional development are kept apart, the first dealing with physical planning, and the second with economic planning/development.

Only a few *other policy sectors* are mentioned in some countries, but they are all of minor importance for the application of the ESDP. Sectors mentioned include:

- Environment, sustainable development, ecology, heritage (Belgium, Czech Rep., France, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Romania, Spain).
- Housing, landscape, agglomeration policy (Luxembourg, Switzerland).
- Innovation, education (Finland, France).
- Tourism (Bulgaria).
- Agriculture (Spain).
- European affairs (the Netherlands, at the provincial level).

2.8.2 The application of policy options and aims is the consequence of both the ESDP and other factors

The attempt to rank the impact of different policy options and aims did not succeed in delivering any relevant information as the various country experts interpreted the question differently. In almost every case however, especially those for the Nordic and North Western planning perspectives, the application of policy options and aims has been defined as a consequence of both the ESDP and other factors. This pattern is logical as the general application of the ESDP was previously defined as being implicit.

Taking the Mediterranean countries as another example, the ESDP has increased awareness among decision makers rather than to leading to concrete actions. Despite Spain having a larger degree of explicit application as compared to other EU15 countries, most policy options and aims already existed before the ESDP's implementation. Polycentricity for instance became an important issue at the national level in Spain due to close relations between systems of cities and transport networks. With regard to environmental aims, Spain has a considerable experience of water resource management as it has suffered from desertification for

many years. Not surprisingly then, policy aims on water management were not new and were not due to the ESDP.

In terms of policy options in the UK there is broad coherence both with many of the ESDP's policy options but also with the procedures for good policy making by promoting horizontal and vertical integration.

In terms of the new Member States, Hungary is a country where there is no policy option that could be characterized as being adopted entirely because of the ESDP.

2.9 Conclusions

There are few direct or visible relations between the degree of application of the ESDP and the different classical European planning regimes described in the introduction as the North-Western, British, Nordic or Mediterranean perspectives.

The application of the ESDP has taken place at the national level in most countries. This is not surprising, since the original participants in the ESDP process came from ministries at the national level. Only for five countries has the regional level been the most important in terms of ESDP application.

From a policy sector point of view the leading sector in terms of the application of the ESDP is spatial planning. What is remarkable here is that there are only a few other examples of other policy sectors that are regarded as important in terms of ESDP application. In two countries where spatial planning at the national level is weak or non-existent, the transport sector is mentioned as being the most important at this level.

Viewed as a process, changes in planning discourses came first in a number of countries. After the maturing of the ideas and perspectives the legislative and institutional system was adjusted and the planning practices changed.

This line of development only takes place where there is a coincidence in timing – if change was going to take place anyway. Arguments taken from the European professional debate could then be used as long as they provided support for the ongoing national reorganisation.

When asked to rank the importance of different categories of impact, about half of the countries did not rank any possible field of action as being important.

A difference can be observed here between the new and old Members of the European Union. In a number of the new Member States, the ESDP has influenced the development of new planning systems and the formation of institutions. Here interest grew after 1999 in the aftermath of the publication of the final document.

For the old Members in general, references to the ESDP are more numerous around the 1997-99 period. Interest in, and application of the ESDP is mostly dependent on the timing in the countries concerned.

Nearly half of the countries reported regional differences in terms of ESDP influence. Factors that influence the degree or intensity of application, relate to e.g. participation in cross-boarder programmes such as INTERREG IIIA.

Concerning the dissemination of the ESDP document, a small number of key-actors have played an important role in this process, often related to national planning authorities. Therefore the awareness of the ESDP is good at the national level, while knowledge of the ESDP decrease at the regional and even more so at the local level.

According to the experiences obtained from the national studies it is possible to argue that the role of the ESDP should be viewed against a progressive evolution and adaptation towards new and common spatial and socio-economic circumstances in Europe. In this process many actions and initiatives have together shaped the planning systems in European countries.

Table 11 Most relevant policy recommendations in national studies

Macro level

- Better information access and distribution (Most countries).
- Keep the work on the ESDP on an informal level (The Netherlands and Germany)
- Less of a consensus on the formulation of fundamental aims and objectives (The Netherlands).

Meso level

- Higher involvement of national, regional and local authorities in trans-national cooperating processes (Italy)
- Long-term perspective in the formulation of sectoral policies and spatial planning (Slovak Republic and Luxemburg).
- Early involvement of actors as a means to promote stronger commitment and higher degree of application of the ESDP (Netherlands and Belgium).

Micro level

- Improvements on vertical integration (Nordic countries and Eastern new Member States.
- Improvements on horizontal integration (Spain, Denmark, Slovenia, Sweden, Ireland and Malta).
- Translation of concepts in the ESDP and spreading down to the local level in order to create a common basis for the formulation of new policies (Mediterranean countries).

3 ESDP application highlighted by case studies

3.1 Introduction

The case studies are intended to act as illustrative examples of how the ESDP has been applied in practice through a variety of different mechanisms. The specific case studies have been chosen to explore a variety of types of ESDP application and have been approved by the national representatives in the ESPON programming committee. To this extent it is important to emphasis that they are illustrative rather than representative of application within the Member States, and indeed should not be seen as being the best or indeed the only evidence of application with or indeed between Member States.

Each case study was constructed according to a common format or template such that the information was gathered in a common manner thus enabling the research team to draw out similarities and differences between the various case studies. Nevertheless, each team member has drawn out particular issues and agendas that are most pertinent to them, and will inevitably deal with different aspects of the template with greater degrees of rigour or depth depending on the information available. This does not mean where a particular aspect within a case study was not fully explored that it did not exist, but rather that the case study authors chose to emphasis a particular aspect of their work.

In this chapter, we explore these common and sometimes divergent themes of application according to the means of application. While each case study is unique and tells an interesting story in its' own right, the purpose of this chapter is to provide an initial synthesis of the findings. In so doing, the case studies themselves will not be described in detail. In order to do this in a logical and structured way we have subdivided the case studies according to the means of application. In total, 24 case studies were undertaken covering a variety of means of application. Most case studies were concerned with application within a national state. Some national case studies explored the extent to which the ESDP had shaped formal planning instruments at both the national and regional scale, some were concerned with the way sectoral issues embraced ESDP thinking and some explored the creation of new agencies for planning. The remaining case studies examined the way the ESDP has been applied in transnational or cross border space, often utilising a variety of European funding mechanisms. By utilising such a framework we can see whether there are common themes or lessons to be drawn from particular approaches to application, always mindful of the fact that each case study will be embedded in a particular national context and the application covers a time frame that extends from the early to mid 1990s until the

current time. Thereafter we draw out relevant ideas exploring the common framework of themes, ways, effects, and actors. The issue of level and scale has been considered in the way that the case study analysis has been categorised and is described briefly in the sections dealing with ways and means.

3.2 Case Studies of Formal Planning Instruments within the national space

3.2.1 Means of Application

In total, ten of the case studies reported on the application of the ESDP through formal planning instruments, (see Table 12). By formal planning instruments, we mean plans that are expected or required by the agencies with formal jurisdiction for spatial planning within a particular territory. In many cases this will relate to national laws, although in some countries such as Belgium and Spain where a federal or quasi-federal structure of government exists the formal plans are a requirement of the sub-national tiers of government. Almost all of these examples of application were related to spatial plans at the sub-national or regional scale, although the Maltese and Slovakian case studies look at strategies that covered the whole of the national territory. With the exception of the Belgian case study, all refer to the experiences gained following the formal adoption of the ESDP. In some cases, a formal plan or strategy is not yet evident while the focus remains on the process of plan making.

Table 12 Embedding the ESDP into formal spatial planning instruments within nation states

	Spatial Planning Instruments Examined
Belgium	Structure Plan for Flanders. This case study explores the extent to which the ESDP shaped the development of the Structure Plan for Flanders. It is a case study that runs in parallel with the evolution of the ESDP and was effectively completed before the ESDP was adopted.
France	Evaluation of the Schémas Regionaux d'Aménagement du Territoire (SRADT). This case study explores the way that these regional schemes across France have been shaped by ESDP thinking
Ireland	Regional Planning Guidance for the Midlands. This case study explores the way at a regional scale the new planning agencies are seeking to develop new planning instruments
Latvia	Riga Planning Region Spatial Plan. This is a new planning instrument that has developed at the scale of the metropolitan region and which has been heavily influenced by ESDP thinking
Malta	Maltese Structure Plan Review. This explores the extent to which ESDP thinking is beginning to inform the ongoing process of reviewing the Maltese Structure Plan that was initially prepared in 1991.
Netherlands	National Spatial Strategy
Portugal	Plano Regional de Ordenamneto do Territrio do Algarve (PROTAL). This case study examines the ways in which ESDP

	thinking has shaped the regional plan for the Algarve that is currently under preparation.
Slovakia	Slovak Spatial Development Plan. This case study explores the influence of the ESDP in the development of a national spatial planning framework for the whole of Slovakia.
Spain	Navarre's Spatial Vision. This is a new spatial planning instrument that is being developed for one of Spain's autonomous regions.
United Kingdom	Regional Planning Guidance for the North West of England. This case study explores the way that the ESDP has been used by a variety of policy actors in the development of regional planning policy in part of England.

Table 1

While the means of implementation was through formal planning systems and processes the acknowledgement that other European funding programmes were also impacting to a greater or lesser extent was made, although it was not always clear whether such programmes (e.g. structural funds) or projects (associated with cross-border and transnational co-operation) were having any significant impact on policy development. In those countries where significant structural fund monies were available, e.g. Ireland, Spain, and Portugal, the importance of this resource for implementing policies was recognised, although the actual impact was less evident. In most of the case studies, reference was made to a variety of different projects funded under various cross border cooperation programmes, and while this helped to enhance the regions understanding of the context within which spatial planning occurred it does not appear to have had a significant impact (see below).

3.2.2 Themes

The key policy theme that seems to have captured the imagination of policy makers in many but not all of the case studies is the application of the idea of polycentricity, which can and has been applied at a variety of spatial scales. In Ireland, three small towns of Mullingar, Athlone and Tullamore worked together to advocate that they should be considered as a national spatial strategic gateway within the National Spatial Plan for Ireland, acting as one of the counterbalancing points to Dublin, thereby promoting more balanced territorial development. The Regional Plan is concerned with elaborating and implementing this idea, based on notions of functional interdependence and the development of complementary specialist functions. In two cases, the polycentric idea was rejected in favour of the classic city region model, which better represented the nature of the territory. This was the case in both Navarre in Spain and in the Riga Spatial Plan. In the case of Riga, however, consideration was still given to the city's position and role as one of a number of centres situated within a wider transnational territory, particularly in relation to Russia and the Baltic states.

Given this emphasis on connectivity and reaching out, much is then made of infrastructural developments. Finally, the protection of the natural and cultural heritage is seen as a priority, because it is an asset that facilitates development. One of the interesting aspects of the Latvian case study is that they have borrowed too many policy options from the ESDP making application more difficult.

Although many of these case studies reported coherence between the policy options within the ESDP and the policy themes that were being developed in national and regional policy it was often difficult to see whether there was a direct cause and effect relationship, so often the links were seen as being implicit rather than explicit. In France for example, a number of regions made explicit reference to the ESDP and in particular to policy themes. The SRADT for Champagne-Ardenne and Auvergne refers explicitly to the ESDP in relation to European cooperation, while that for Burgundy refers to European Transport Networks, and Picardie to the three main orientations of the ESDP fitting perfectly with the strategic needs of the region). Elsewhere there is a strong coincidence between ESDP policy aims and regional objectives although the links are never made explicit.

3.2.3 Ways

One of the common themes to emerge from these cases studies was evidence of greater collaborative working, particularly within the territory for which the plan was being produced. Hence, in Portugal, the process of producing the new PROTAL for the Algarve has seen the local mayors working together in ways that had not previously been evident. In Ireland, there was a coming together of local authorities and partners seeking to work together for their mutual benefit. In Riga, the Spatial Plan was very different to previous highly centralised traditions and sought also to be more inclusive, following the best principles of spatial planning. In the UK, the development of new spatial policy is predicated on ideas of greater stakeholder engagement and dialogue with the hope of developing consensus. As such, the case studies illustrate the way in which horizontal integration is being achieved. While such ideas are however embedded in the ESDP, it is not necessarily the case that such practices resulted form the ESDP. In Flanders for example the structure plan was produced using a ‘cooperative model’ whereby different governmental sectors and other governmental and non-governmental advisors were engaged in a collaborative process.

In terms of horizontal integration the picture seemed much more mixed and reflected the characteristics of individual nations. In some countries there did appear to be good vertical integration with national policy shaping regional agendas, which in turn, in theory at least will shape local

agendas. This in part reflects the more co-operative and collaborative approach to planning highlighted earlier. This was particularly evident in Portugal and Ireland for example. Elsewhere the extent to which vertical integration was evident was much more difficult to discern and in some cases there was considerable tensions evident between the national and sub-national levels. In the new accession countries this gap was to some extent explained by the newness of the systems and in the case of Riga a gap in national spatial planning and other similar agencies and instruments in other parts of the country. In Slovakia, it was acknowledged that having created a national framework the next phase was to cascade the approach to other regional and local actors and instruments. Hence the lack of integration was a function of an absence of instruments as new systems are developed. In countries that have a more federal structure the relationship between the sub-national case study and the nation state was much more evident. This is because in both Belgium and Spain the regions have considerable autonomy and often a strained relationship with the nation state. As such, Navarre's Spatial Vision was an initiative developed by the region itself, using it's own legislative powers, and making no reference to national policy. Furthermore in Navarre's case it was also reported that there were some difficulties in coordinating actions below the level of the autonomous communities, unless there were financial incentives to encourage greater co-ordination.

3.2.4 **Effects**

In terms of the effects of the ESDP as evidenced through these case studies, there was little evidence of the ESDP creating new structures or instruments, except possibly in the new accession countries of Eastern Europe. In Latvia and Slovakia, some of the new ways of thinking and working were however evident in the new agencies and in the ways in which they worked, although the ESDP was only one of the sources of inspiration and influence. In the development of the Riga Spatial Plan, other informal policy documents such as Habitat II, Baltic Palette, VASAB, and Agenda Baltic 21 were considered to have exerted a similar influence.

The effects of the ESDP and other European funding regimes, particularly on cross border and transnational cooperation initiatives, has been to heighten awareness of the European context within which the region operates. The emphasis placed on such ideas varies from case study to case study. In the Irish case study, this idea does not figure so prominently as it is a context and agenda addressed predominantly at the national scale. The North West of England has witnessed over time a growing appreciation of the fact that the region's well-being is dependant on it's external connections, both immediate cross border, but also wider transnational, with the so- called NETA corridor being given greater prominence in the strategy. In the Netherlands, one of the traditional

underlying philosophies of Dutch policy has been to maximise the opportunities afforded by operating within a European context. Following the election of a new right of centre government in 2002 however, there has been a marked step back in the extent to which the ESDP and the wider European spatial context for the Netherlands' development is emphasised within the new National Spatial Strategy. This illustrates how the domestic settings in which policies are developed can exert a powerful influence on the degree to which the ESDP and the European context for spatial development are viewed as important issues in the formulation of policy. In Portugal, while the plan has still to be produced it is clear that the Algarve's spatial position within Europe as a peripheral region with a significant level of dependency on tourism is sub-optimal. In France, depending on the location of the region the emphasis placed on cross border and transnational cooperation varied. In the west the Atlantic fringe regions made much of their peripheral European status, in the north the links to the Benelux countries and the wider North West Metropolitan Areas were highlighted. While there is general recognition of the scope for greater transnational cooperation in Navarre, the specific cultural conditions that relate to that area in juxtaposition with different cultural contexts in adjoining parts of Spain and southern France make greater collaboration more difficult. As such, one of the key features to emerge from these case studies is that many of the new strategies are being presented in a wider spatial context and thus can be said to represent a spatial repositioning of policy. Again it is hard to determine cause and effect, although the ESDP and other European influences have had an effect.

In terms of spatial representations it is clear that there are new forms of spatial plan being developed and these are less prescriptive and as a consequence less detailed and more indicative in nature. As a result the nature of the spatial representations are also beginning to change although how these can be ascribed to the influence of the ESDP given the lack of maps and plans in the documentation is difficult to determine from the case studies alone.

3.2.5 Actors

In terms of the actors and the way that various actors use the ESDP many of the case studies intimate that knowledge and use of the ESDP was confined to a small number of key influential actors, and that many players in the making of the plans either new or cared little about the ESDP. This was certainly the message from the Belgian case study, where there appeared to be little or no formal dissemination of ESDP thinking from the national perspective. In Portugal, the development of the PROTAL for Algarve appeared to being driven by the influence of a key individual and elsewhere knowledge about the document seemed limited

and certainly was not penetrating below the national or regional levels. One exception to this was the UK where though knowledge of the document remains limited, the process of plan making which enabled all interested stakeholders to have a say in the process, saw many use the ESDP as a support and justification for their positions and thus it had a slightly wider circulation. A final comment in relation to the actors relates to the relevance of the document to current policy makers. Here once again the picture seems rather mixed. In those countries where the system is mature and reasonably effective some of the ideas may be now becoming embedded in practice although their origins in and influence of the ESDP may no longer be so relevant. Elsewhere in some of the new accession countries, and those countries in southern Europe seeking to reform their spatial planning systems, it is still seen as a source of inspiration.

3.2.6 Conclusions

Where the ESDP seemed to have the more significant impact was in those systems that were undergoing significant change at the time of ESDP adoption. In the new accession countries the ideas of spatial planning and the need for new instruments for spatial planning, and the ideas of the ESDP in particular have been a source of inspiration. This was particularly evident from the Latvian case study for example. In some countries where there were or are perceived flaws in the system of planning again the ideas of spatial planning embodied in the ESDP have been influential in helping to shape new or strengthen existing policy instruments. This was the case in Spain, Portugal, Ireland, and to some extent in the UK. One recurrent theme that was evident across several case studies was the tension that existed between the framers of the ESDP, which was often perceived as being a national responsibility, and the remoteness of regional actors to this process. This was particularly evident in terms of the Belgian, French, and Spanish case studies. Despite this, the ESDP was used as one, but only one, of several sources of inspiration in the development of policy. Many of the substantive and procedural themes within the ESDP were considered to be part of the current thinking about best practice and therefore it was relatively easy to see how plans at this stage could conform to this way of thinking, but it was not always easy to determine full cause and effect. As such, there was implicit application and coherence with the ideas. The ESDP was a document that came along at the right moment in time and had thus had some influence.

3.3 Case Studies of Informal Spatial Planning Instruments within nation states

3.3.1 Means

There are three nationally orientated case studies which look at what might be described as innovative applications of the ESDP through the creation of voluntary informal partnership arrangements and strategies that do not form part of the formal spatial planning system in that particular country (see Table 13). In two of the three cases (Denmark and Sweden), the collaborative ventures existed prior to the ESDP being developed and indeed, they are examples of application insofar as there is considerable conformity between the case studies and the substantive and procedural aspects of the ESDP. In the Italian case, which is more recent in origin, some of the thinking and justification can be linked to the emerging idea of polycetricity and its relevance as an idea for northern Italy. The other two case studies report that polycentricity, or functional interdependence between local urban centres, has been one of the main drivers for cooperation. There is then strong coincidence rather than causality evident here. Furthermore, knowledge of the ESDP among the key actions is almost non-existent. All three are characterised by bottom up approaches, perhaps facilitated by higher- level support, designed to create emergent new levels of functional governance at a regional or sub-regional scale.

Table 13 National Case Studies involving informal partnership arrangements.

	Characterisation of the case study
Denmark	The Triangle Area, a case study of voluntary cooperation between eight municipalities trying to create a complementary (polycentric) urban network.
Italy	The North West Macro-Region, a voluntary working arrangement to help to create an integrated, polycentric functional urban region
Sweden	The Stocholm-Malar region, a longstanding voluntary arrangement designed to promote the well- being of the central functional region.

3.3.2 Themes

The main theme characterising all three case studies is the idea of creating or further exploiting a local multifunctional urban system. The idea of polycentricity is thus the ESDP theme that has greatest resonance within these case studies, although within the Italian case study the role of transport networks and corridors is given equal prominence in the drive to enhance regional competitiveness.

3.3.3 Ways

The main way in which these case studies operated is through horizontal co-operation between local municipalities and counties to create or indeed strengthen new institutions and agencies at a higher spatial scale. Where policy instruments have been created, they exist in the main beyond what could be described as formal planning arrangements. As has already been noted the collaborative arrangements in Denmark and Sweden predate the adoption of the ESDP and largely run in parallel to its production, although for the sub-national partnerships there is almost no cognisance of the ESDP as a policy toolkit. In Denmark, what is now known as the Triangle Area is one of the designated national centres, identified in the 1997 National Planning Report, and could be conceived as a Danish attempt to apply the polycentricity principles of the ESDP. This conclusion would however be erroneous because the project to promote voluntary cooperation was funded as a demonstration project to create an urban network in 1992. At this stage it was known as the String City Cooperation. In Sweden, an informal special interest organisation, the Council for the Malar Region was founded in 1992. Today it has the active membership of all of the counties and municipalities in the region. In Italy, collaboration is much more recent in origin dating from the formal collaboration between Turin and Milan which began in 2003, but now including other municipalities in the region. The key idea in all three case studies is to create a more integrated, functional region that can promote economic development for the benefit of all.

3.3.4 Effects

The effects of these collaborations have been to promote closer working relationships between functional regions within a context where there is an institutional vacuum. Hence in both Sweden and Demark strong bodies representing the functional regions have emerged. This in turn has led to the development of a number of strategic documents that attempt to articulate the benefits of collaboration and develop a spatial framework for the development of the area concerned. In 2004, the municipalities of the triangle Area produced a joint master plan (hovedstruktur) for the region for the period 2003-2014, which, within the Danish context is considered novel. In the Malar, a joint report (A physical Vision for Malar Region) published in 1996 outlined a vision for the physical development of the region up to 2020/30. This report highlighted the need to develop international competitiveness, the need for long- term sustainable and economic cooperation, and the need for greater cooperation in the Baltic Sea region and in Europe more generally. Such effects are not in anyway conditional on the ESDP, but while they are coherent with the broad philosophy of the ESDP, they can only be described as coincidental.

Indeed within Sweden and Denmark at least, there was no real evidence that the ESDP was even known to the key actors.

In the Italian case the effects of European activities in general might be considered to be more influential in helping to facilitate the emerging collaboration. Work carried out by the CPRM suggested that the Northern Italian Macro-region might be an emergent growth zone that could help to counterbalance the dominant Pentagon. This has helped to foster a more collaborative approach. At the same time, European Structural Funds are currently being used to improve connectivity between the key cities. Emphasis is currently being placed on collaboration in respect of networking and building trust, while there are no formal structures or instruments to fully articulate this idea. The Italian case is then a case of 'step by step' application influenced in part by wider 'EU lessons' about collaboration, multi-level working, the new 'macro-regional' scale of territorial competition, and the TEN related TO-MI 2010 infrastructure project. The case is not one of direct application but rather of ‘step-by-step’ application or implicit application based on 'bottom-up' cooperation encouraged by a variety of EU initiatives (SFs, Urban and INTERREG).

3.3.5 Actors

All of the actors in these case studies have recognised the benefits of mutual collaboration in order to further their own agendas, and that by working together they can collectively have stronger lobbying powers. Most of the participants have worked together from the bottom up, although such activities might have been facilitated by top down resources. There is however little if any knowledge or understanding of the ESDP among the key actors.

3.3.6 Conclusions

These three case studies are interesting insofar as they demonstrate that a bottom up process of collaboration is evident is some places, however given the nature of the case studies it is impossible to suggest whether this is a pattern which has wider applicability across Europe. They also serve to illustrate very clearly how many of the ideas of the ESDP can be applied in practice without the key actors having any direct knowledge or understanding of this policy document.

3.4 Case Studies Dealing with specific issues or themes within nation states

3.4.1 Means

Three national case studies chose to focus their case study on a particular sector or policy focus. This makes it difficult to identify common themes and ideas, though some general synthesising comments can be made.

Table 14 provides a brief summary of the three case studies falling within this categorisation. One of their defining characteristics is that they all come from the recent accession countries and to some extent, in at least two cases, the ESDP is either perceived as having little relevance or there has not been sufficient time to see evidence of application. This idea was also evident in the Maltese case study discussed above in section 3.2, which explored the process of structure plan modification that had just begun, while there were only some vague references to the ESDP in some topic papers. This seemed to be so because limited knowledge of the ESDP, as a document, existed.

Table 14 National case studies dealing with specific topics or themes

	Sectoral or thematic topics
Cyprus	This case study provides an evaluation of the ESDP for the urban planning system of Cyprus
Hungary	This case study examines the influence of the ESDP and other European influences in introducing explicit consideration of natural and cultural heritage formally into the spatial planning instruments of Hungary
Poland	This case study explores the changing levels of accessibility to centres of higher education in Poland

3.4.2 Themes

These three case studies explore different themes within the ESDP. Within the context of the Cypriot case it is difficult to discern the specific theme being applied. As regards Hungary, the theme of wise management of the cultural and natural heritage has been taken from the ESDP as the missing element in the Hungarian spatial planning system and as with other accession countries the ESDP has been used to help improve the spatial planning system. In Poland, the focus of the case study is linked predominantly to the theme of parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge, particularly in describing what the territorial impact on the Polish population has been of the reform of the higher education system.

3.4.3 Ways

There is little evidence provided in the case studies in terms of how the ESDP has affected the degree of integration within and between levels of governance. Nor is there any discussion as to whether, or how, the considered themes have led to greater or better spatial integration. It is however worth noting that the transnational and cross border cooperative initiatives have been particularly important for Hungary in terms of both making them aware of the need to consider natural and cultural heritage matters more fully, but also that such projects have demonstrated how collaboration can lead to better coordination, management and protection of natural resources.

3.4.4 Effects

The effects are most evident in the Hungarian case where much greater emphasis is now being given to protecting the cultural and natural heritage and to viewing it as an asset that can consequently be exploited. These elements are considered much more explicitly in the National Development Plan and the National Spatial Development Plan, the former being developed for the utilisation of European Structural Funds. Elsewhere in both Poland and Cyprus the case studies do not demonstrate any real application of the ESDP. In Poland the case study shows how sectoral policy impacts, in this case in the field of higher education provision, have resulted in significant territorial or spatial impacts in terms of access too, and the take up of, higher education opportunities, although it is not clear how this is shaping spatial development policy. In Cyprus, the fact that it is a new accession country suggests it is still too early to see any impacts in processes or procedures although it is suggested that existing policies show signs of conformity with some of the ESDP ideas.

3.4.5 Actors

It would seem from the case studies that very few actors have been involved in these processes. Indeed while the ESDP offers an opportunity for new styles of planning, the first step in Cyprus will be to make planners aware of the new spatial planning approach being advocated by this document, for which they currently have no knowledge.

3.4.6 Conclusions

It is difficult to draw out common themes from three very different case studies. Two of these studies, namely, Cyprus and Poland do however show limited application of the ESDP. Although in Cyprus the ESDP may have a greater role in the coming years it seems, for the present at least, that any conformity between planning documents such as Development Plans and the policy principles of the ESDP does not reflect an explicit causal relationship. In Hungary by contrast the case study shows how the ESDP has been used to help identify and fill a perceived gap in national thinking towards the natural and cultural environment and thus it could be said to have had a direct impact.

3.5 Case Studies of innovative application and/or organisational change within member states

3.5.1 Means

There are two national case studies where there is an innovative application of the ESDP either through innovative institutional practices or via the development of a completely new institution. In Germany a

Committee of Experts in Spatial Development (CESD) was created to address a particular task, namely the way in which spatial planning or spatial development should, or could, be taken forward in the new EU Constitutional Treaty arrangements. The role and task of the CESD was time limited. In 2002, a group of technical experts, including international experts from other Member States, were contracted to provide expert advice to the Federal Minister for Transport, Construction and Housing, thus constituting the CESD, which reported in 2005. In Greece a new agency was created to monitor and evaluate the impact of a new motorway and disseminate the impacts to key planners at the national and sub-national level.

	Case Study Characteristics
Germany	Committee of Experts in Spatial Development (CESD) a body brought together in response to a consultancy project funded by the German Federal Government
Greece	The Egnatia Odos Observatory, a new institution designed to monitor and disseminate the territorial impacts of a new motorway

Table 2 Case Studies of organisational change within nation States

3.5.2 Themes

The themes of the ESDP were not really applicable to either case, although some of the reports produced by the Observatory were organised in such a way as to be consistent with the four policy principles of the ESDP. The role of the *Egnatia Odos* Observatory is to provide information and advice, which other policy actors would then use in the justification and creation of their strategies. The Observatory is relatively new; its current work began in 2003. Although suggestions have been made as to possible spatial development programmes (for Central and Western Macedonia), it is still too early to evaluate its impact.

3.5.3 Ways

In both cases the primary function is to provide advice and information to other actors. In the case of the CESD, their role was to advise the centre as to the division of tasks in the field of spatial planning between the nation state and the EU, which it hoped would be formalised through revisions to the EU constitution. It was therefore charged with providing technical advice as to how the ideas of the ESDP could be more formally embedded in EU policy activities, especially in terms of regulating the EUs competence in the field of spatial planning. The CESD claimed some of the credit for introducing the idea of 'territorial cohesion' as an objective of the EU alongside social and economic cohesion. The primary role of the Observatory is to provide information and advice, both up to the national

government but also down to regional and local authorities that have been, or will be, affected by this major transport corridor.

3.5.4 Effects

It is too early to say whether either body has had any fundamental effects. While there were some additions in the EU Constitution coherent with the advice offered by the CESD, it remains to be seen whether it can be ratified in its current form. With the Observatory, independent advice has been given, but whether or indeed exactly how this has had an impact on policy remains to be seen.

3.5.5 Actors

The actors involved in both case studies were a small group of technical experts. With the CESD there advice was narrowly channelled to the national minister. The Observatory's experts were however located in a private consultancy firm and were tasked with improving the knowledge base upon which decisions could be made.

3.5.6 Conclusions

These two cases detailing organisational changes within Member States are difficult to categorise in terms of the application of the ESDP. The CESD is clearly an initiative designed to respond to the issue of how the European dimensions of spatial planning and development can be responded to by actions at the EU and Member State levels. In this sense it is an explicit response to, and reflection on, the issues left unresolved at the end of the ESDP process. It can thus be seen, indirectly, as a response to the call in the ESDP for Member States to 'examine the suggestions of the European institutions to formalise both the Ministerial meetings on spatial planning and the Committee on spatial development, while respecting the principle of subsidiarity' (CEC 1999, p. 37).

The *Egnatia* road Observatory can be seen as a response to the ESDPs call for the Member States to develop national regulations and instruments in relation to TIA (CEC 1999, 45). This is a case where the diffusion and application of ESDP ideas and principles reflects the adoption of such principles in the national planning system, and an explicit response to a particular context (i.e. the construction of the new motorway). Although the main goal was not the immediate application of the ESDP - as expressed through the Greek spatial planning system - but rather the monitoring of the spatial impacts of the new *Egnatia* TEN motorway in northern Greece, the organisation of the data and indicators is structured according to ESDP policy guidelines (i.e. polycentricity, parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge, and environmental protection). As such, the

Observatory contributes to the application of such principles even if such an application is more clearly implicit than explicit.

3.6 Case Studies of Transnational/Cross Border Spatial Planning

3.6.1 Means

Seven of the cases studies considered instances of the application of the ESDP through transnational and/or cross border spatial planning initiatives (Table 15).

Table 15 Case Studies of Transnational/Cross Border Spatial Planning

PlaNet CenSE (Planners Network of Central and South East Europe). An INTERREG IIIB CADSES (Central European, Adriatic, Danubian, South-Eastern European Space) aiming to foster spatial integration and cross -sectoral dialogue around several strands in Central and South East Europe. Two strands are particularly important in relation to ESDP application. Firstly, the 'European Spatial Planning Gateway' project, which supports the application of the ESDP by promoting the transfer of knowledge and dialogue in the CADSES countries and the elaboration of a common strategic document for the CADSES area. Secondly, the 'Forum for Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA)', which seeks to develop TIA as a planning instrument and test it through two pilot projects.
Cross-border regional/city cooperation Graz (A) and Maribor (SI) A case study of cooperation in the cross-border region of north-eastern Slovenia (Podravje) and the southern part of Austrian Styria (Suedsteiermark) along the axis between the two cities of Maribor (SI) and Graz (A). The institutional context is provided by the regional development agencies on the Slovenian side of the border, and by the EU regional funding management authority on the Austrian side. Cooperation has been supported by INTERREG II & III funding which will continue to be complemented until 2006 by the EU's PHARE CBC programme.
Öresund Region A cooperation project initiated by the Swedish and Danish Governments to jointly develop the Skåne and Zealand areas and which is supported by the INTERREG programme. The institutional context for cooperation is provided by the Öresund Committee established in 1992, which brings together representatives of regional and local authorities in Skåne and Greater Copenhagen and administers the INTERREG funds for the Öresund Region.
Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Plan for Lithuania and Latvia An ICZM project for the Baltic coast of Lithuania and Latvia initiated by the World Bank, and executed and funded by the EU PHARE Programme. Consultants from universities, institutes, and Government Ministries drew on a systemisation and synthesis of existing research results and land management expertise to prepare an ICZM Management Plan.
Cross border management of the river landscapes An international project involving five institutions from four Central European countries, looking at planned and coordinated development in the valley of the lower Morava and Dyje rivers in southern Moravia (CZ). The project was designed by the Akademie für die Raumordenung und Landesplanung (ARL) in Hannover, and is coordinated by the Leibnitz Institute for Ecological Spatial

Development in Dresden. The project aims to design and test a new spatial planning model and instrument suitable for application in complicated areas such as river landscapes in cross-border regions. It also aims to identify the most significant cross-border problems and find cross-border solutions, which can be supported by the use of INTERREG funds.
Via Baltica Via Baltica is the name applied to the shortest route connecting Finland with central Europe through the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It is an international transport corridor, which is of strategic importance for land transport in the Eastern part of the Baltic Sea Region. The process of developing the corridor dates back to the early 1990s and cooperation was later coordinated through the establishment of a multinational monitoring committee and supported by funds from the INTERREG IIC (Via Baltica Nordica Spatial Development Zone) and IIIB programmes. The INTRREG cooperation has drawn on the earlier VASAB work and the Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.
The Saar-Lor-Lux+ Spatial Development Perspective (SLL+ SDP) The Saar-Lor-Lux+ Spatial Development Perspective fits into the larger context of cooperation between the Lorraine region of France, the German Länder of Saar and the Rheinland-Pfalz, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Walloon region of Belgium. The area concerned is referred to as the 'Greater Region'. The development of the SLL+ SDP has evolved within the context of pre-existing interregional cooperation and has coincided with the period of the drafting of the ESDP. The area concerned is often presented as having the potential to act as a counterweight to the dominance of the main metropolitan regions of the European core, or 'Pentagon', area. The case study considers how the policy guidelines of the SDP, which are the same as those of the ESDP, were taken into account into the relevant spatial development instruments of Luxembourg and the Walloon region.

The link between the ESDP and the INTERREG programme is recognised, for example, in the Via Baltica case study where it is suggested that the influence of the ESDP has come mainly through INTERREG programmes which have been the most important tools for applying the ideas of the ESDP.

Cross-border cooperation funded by INTERREG IIIA played a role in a number of the cases. In the Via Baltica case study, cooperation in the cross-border Euroregion Neman between Poland and Lithuania has addressed the issue of bio-diversity along the route of the proposed Via Baltica highway. This can be seen as contributing to the application of the ESDP's wise management of the natural heritage theme. In the case of Graz-Maribor, INTERREG IIA and the PHARE programme helped stimulate and support cross-border cooperation while INTRREG IIIA currently supports a number of projects in the fields of economic cooperation and sustainable spatial development, including one which considers the 'Upgrading of Strategies for Urban Development and Environmental Protection of the Regional Capitals, Maribor and Graz'.

In terms of the Öresund region it is suggested that the explicit application of the ESDP is related to the running of INTRREG III and IIIB, as there is an explicit reference to the ESDP in the formulation of these programmes.

The projects that have been financed through INTERREG are also seen as being in line with the ESDP in their emphasis on cross-border cooperation. The INTERREG IIIA Öresund programme is managed by the Greater Copenhagen Authority and has funded a number of projects including 'Öresund Logistics' which seeks to promote the region's development as one of the most important hubs in Europe, and 'The Öresund Project – FRIngo' which seeks to promote cooperation and integration between NGOs and non-profit organisations in the Öresund area. In the case of the cross-border management of the river landscapes of the Morava and Dyje rivers (Czech Republic), one aim of the project is to identify the most significant cross-border problems and find cross-border solutions that can be supported by the use of INTERREG funds. A number of existing INTERREG IIIA, IIIB and PHARE projects are mentioned, covering areas such as the economy, agriculture, tourism, traffic infrastructure and water management, the environment, energy and the relationship of man to the biosphere. A PHARE supported project supported the establishment of a EUREGIO forum bringing together NGOs from the border area. In the Saar-Lor-Lux+ Spatial Development Perspective (SLL+ SDP) case, although this is clearly an example of cross-border, transnational, and interregional cooperation, no support from INTERREGIIC or IIIB has been sought. This is not to say that no examples of INTERREG supported cross-border cooperation exist within the area covered by the SLL+ SDP, for example, the Pôle Européen de Développement initiative at the meeting point of Belgium, France and Luxembourg is one such measure. In 2000 proposals emerged to establish a common 'framework perspective' to help with the coordination of the INTERREG IIIA projects within the territory of the Greater Region, however, this encountered a number of significant obstacles due to the financial implications that could have potentially resulted from the various individual projects.

In a number of the cases, INTERREG IIIB has however played a significant role. For example, in relation to the Via Baltica cooperation zone, which is supported the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) INTERREG IIIB programme (2002-2005). In this case, the application of the ESDP is described as being implicit or secondary, and transnational cooperation within the INTERREG IIIB BSR region is the route through which the influence of the ESDP has been exerted. Earlier transnational cooperation through the VASAB initiative is also seen as being closely interlinked with the ESDP process and as a result, it is difficult to distinguish between the effects of the ESDP and VASAB 2010. In the Öresund region, a number of projects have been financed including the 'Rural Development Connection' which focuses on the sustainable development of rural areas as places to live and work and includes 37 partners from four EU Member States. In the Graz-Maribor case the Alpine Space and CADSES international cooperation areas are relevant, and the associated programmes support a variety of projects.

The PlaNet CenSE (Planners network of Central and South Eastern Europe) project is an INTRREG IIIB CADSES project that aims to foster spatial integration and cross-sectoral dialogue around several strands of issues. It is also suggested in this case study that there are a wide variety of INTERREG IIIA and IIIB projects which address the aims of the ESDP (and that this was also the case in the previous programming period) including the INTERREG IIC project Vision Planet, but that there are also 'hundreds of smaller' projects which are going on and that a pressing issue for administrators and politicians is the need to gain an overview of all of these activities and their effects.

Other programmes have also played an important role, notably the PHARE Cross Border Cooperation programme in the accession states. This is mentioned in the cases of Via Baltica, the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) plan, which was financed by the PHARE programme, and in the case of cooperation in the Graz-Maribor region. In the case of the PlaNet CenSE project, it is suggested that overall, the structural funds, especially INTERREG, generally provoke much more institutional and policy change than the ESDP directly. In the SLL+ SDP case, the SLL+ study was supported by ERDF Article 10, even if the resulting spatial perspective could not be made to fit easily into the EU supported framework of programmes to support transnational cooperation (INTERREG IIC / IIIB and Article 10 Pilot Actions). It is acknowledged that structural fund monies may help with the implementation of the guidelines from the SLL+ SDP through individual INTERREG supported projects and Objective 2 and potentially Leader+ supported measures. In relation to the Urban Exchange Initiative (UEI) it is noted that, although there is no direct link between this and the SLL+ SDP, the Quattropoloe urban cooperation, which takes place in the SLL+ space, fits in with the spirit of the UEI and the ESDP. The role of Objective 2 is also discussed in the Öresund region where this applied to two areas – Storstrøm and the Island of Bornholm. The funds are being used help to try to rebalance the development of the region reflecting an objective of the Danish Government to promote the rebalancing of the development of the counties around the periphery of Copenhagen.

3.6.2 Themes

In the Via Baltica Nordica INTERREG IIIB project, the development of railway infrastructure is seen as contributing to polycentric spatial development. By enhancing connectivity between the proximate metropolises within the zone this is seen as contributing to living in polycentric 'human' units. Initiatives to promote tourism are also seen as being based on the development of a number of different but interconnected centres and thus as also contributing to polycentric and

balanced spatial development and dynamic, attractive and competitive cities and urbanised regions. The Via Baltica Nordica project is also seen as contributing to the guideline of parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge, for example, by the promotion of a polycentric development model as the basis for better accessibility and the efficient and sustainable use of infrastructure such as the railway system. The Development of the Accessibility to the Railway Traffic initiative (DART) seeks to promote integrated approaches to land use planning and rail provision.

In the Öresund region, a cross-border project supported by INTERREG has sought to address the living situation for those living outside the most populated areas of the region. Another regional project, which seeks to promote parity of access, is the Skåne-MaTs project where the ESDP is used as a point of departure and the aim is to develop a balanced and polycentric system, improved infrastructure and education as well as sustainable management and protection of nature and cultural heritage. It is also noted in the case study that the Öresund region is 'intimately linked to the EU's regional development policies through the INTERREG programmes and the structural funds and the ideas behind the integration are intimately linked to the ideological basis for the ESDP' (p.23).

Elsewhere, the three guidelines of the SLL+ SDP are the same as those of the ESDP, and as a result 'the coherence in this matter is total and explicit' (p.21). The SLL+ SDP applies the ESDP to the features of the territory it covers, and overall all the policy aims of the ESDP are covered in some way by the SDP with a generally very good level of convergence. This is not necessarily due solely to the influence of the ESDP however, as other factors, such as the specific situation of the SLL+ space and the pre-existence of a number of cooperation initiatives have also had an impact. The clearest influence of the ESDP appears to be in relation to the first spatial development guideline of polycentric spatial development and a new urban-rural relationship, where the SLL+ SDP refers to the ESDP in relation to this thematic issue. Attention is also focussed on cross-border urban agglomerations and cross-border rural spaces, and it is noted that in this domain, the degree of conformity with the ESDP also reflects the requirements of specific local conditions.

In the case of the 'Cross border management of the Morava and Dyje river landscapes' it is noted that, although the ESDP is not well known at the local and regional levels in the Czech Republic, most of its principles can be seen to be applied in relevant Czech legislation. In relation to the area covered by the river management initiative, there are a number of initiatives and designations that are coherent with ESDP policy guidelines. These include initiatives designed to improve access to European transport infrastructure and to secure the wise management of the natural and

cultural heritage (e.g. The Pálava hills MAB UNESCO designation and the preparation of cultural and historical area protection plans for Lednice and Valtice). In the PlaNet CenSE network, attention has focussed on investigating possible future polycentric development areas (from a morphological and cooperation perspective) as well as the potential for the development of a new Global Economic Integration Zone or other polycentric structures in the CADSES area, all of which was based on the results of ESPON 1.1.1 project.

The Graz-Maribor cross-border region case study and the cooperation therein is described as coinciding with the ESDP's polycentric spatial development theme, with less attention being focussed on urban-rural development and partnership within the region. Attention is also focussed on the diffusion of innovation and knowledge in the cross-border region, with this being seen as an important factor in cross-border spatial development policy. The wise management of the natural heritage is also reflected in aspects of the cooperation. A large number of projects and cooperation initiatives contributing to the application of the ESDP's three spatial development guidelines are listed, including the INTERREG IIIA supported EU-Regio Northeast Slovenia – Styria, the Graz-Maribor Technology Axis, and the 'Ecoprofit' private-public partnership aiming at reducing the environmental impacts of industrial activities.

All of the ESDP's spatial development guidelines have also been reflected in the Lithuanian and Latvian ICZM project, which addresses issues such as infrastructure development, developing rural tourism and measures to address the impacts of the use and development of the coastal zone. Lithuanian documents issued recently are seen as corresponding to ESDP policy and legislation such as the 2002 Law on the Coastal Zone, which also addresses the relevant themes.

3.6.3 Ways

3.6.3.1 Vertical Integration

In the Öresund region the work of the Öresund Committee is seen as an example of cooperation between the municipalities, regional authorities, and national representatives from both sides of the sound. The links to the INTERREG IIIA, IIIB, and the previous IIC programmes also reflect vertical links, with the region being characterised as having a flagship programme within INTERREG. The administration of INTERREG monies is also seen as having contributed to a strengthening of functional cooperation between counties and municipalities in the region. In the Via Baltica project, cooperation occurs at every level with actors being involved from the local, regional, and national levels. This is seen as being part of the INTERREG IIIB approach, while also producing good results. The ICZM plan for Lithuania and Latvia aims to integrate and combine

local municipal, regional, national, and international interests in the areas of general land use and in costal protection in particular. At the national level the Government of Lithuania is preparing a draft Coastal Zone Law, while at the county level a master plan for Klaipeda County is currently under preparation. In addition, coastal municipalities have their own master plans. ICZM is seen as requiring a multisectoral, and participatory approach, which is designed to eliminate overlaps and the duplication of effort, as well as helping to resolve conflicts, and provide opportunities for the actors involved to recognise mutual advantage in joint action. As ICZM does not supplant or override existing territorial plans, national plans or any formal sectoral or detailed plans, while the implementation of its proposals is to take place through the statutory planning system in addition to specific projects or programmes. There is then a need for the vertical and horizontal integration of the various policy sectors and levels of administration for its delivery to be successful.

3.6.3.2 Horizontal Integration

Horizontal integration and cooperation has been recognised as a necessary feature of the Via Baltica corridor since the initial VASAB work undertaken in the early 1990s. The need to look at the corridor as a wider area rather than solely from an infrastructural perspective meant that other issues such as the environment, economic development, and various cultural aspects had to be recognised. This attention to horizontal cooperation has continued into the current INTERREG IIIB Via Baltica Development Zone project, which is based around three different themes. It is noted that as the project is international this can bring together actors who may not otherwise cooperate.

In the Öresund region, the 'Environmental Programme' launched to accompany the development of the 'Öresund bridge' had the goal of ensuring that the region should develop as one of the cleanest metropolitan regions in Europe. The programme focussed on enhancing horizontal cooperation on the environment and planning between the two sides of the sound, and resulted in physical planning guidelines based around the topics of land-use, transportation, and recreation/biological diversity.

3.6.4 Effects

3.6.4.1 Institutional Changes

Institutional changes feature in a number of the cases however; the extent to which these can be linked to the application of the ESDP is limited.

The Via Baltica Monitoring Committee was in existence between 1996 and 2002 and was based principally around cooperation between the BSR countries. This is not however seen as a direct impact of the ESDP. Similarly, in the Öresund region it is noted that the effect of the ESDP on the institutional set-up has been minimal as the institutional changes relating to the region occurred prior to the preparation and presentation of the ESDP. In relation to the ICZM plan for Lithuania and Latvia, no institutions or agencies with responsibility for implementing and evaluating ICZM have as yet been created. Similarly, in relation to the ICZM plan for Lithuania and Latvia no institutions or agencies with responsibility for implementing and evaluating ICZM have as yet been created.

In the Öresund region it was noted that there have been no institutional changes directly attributable to the ESDP while note should again be made of the fact that the Öresund Committee was established in 1992. In the context of the cross-border/city cooperation between Graz and Maribor, the institutional framework for cooperation is based on the activities of the agencies for regional development on the Slovenian side of the border, and on those of the administrating authority for EU regional funds on the Austrian side. There is also institutional cooperation between municipalities on both sides of the border and other institutions such as universities and planning institutions. The emergence of cross-border institutional cooperation has however been supported by the INTERREG IIA and PHARE programmes. In the PlaNET CenSE case study it is noted that the ESDP itself has caused no changes in institutional settings but the INTRREG programme (as one outcome of the ESDP process) has promoted many cooperation initiatives and networks, which are in part trying to define new institutional settings (e.g. EURegios). In the SLL+ SDP case it is noted that although institutional changes have occurred in the course of the project these seem to be due to causes other than the ESDP, and in particular to an awareness on the part of different actors of the need to put in place a more rational and efficient organisation to oversee future cooperation.

3.6.4.2 Changes in planning policies, practices or culture (discourses)

In terms of planning practices, within the BSR and in the accession countries in particular, the Via Baltica case notes there are now more opportunities for citizens to comment on proposed changes to where they live. The ESDP is however seen as only having had an indirect impact on the evolution of planning practices. In Finland in contrast, it is suggested that the ESDP was a ‘big issue’ and often referred to in discussions on planning at the end of the 1990s. In the Via Baltica case, the ESDP is described as having been a topical issue at the end of the 1990s but it is

suggested that since then, ‘the enthusiasm has calmed down’. As a result, the impact of the ESDP was greater on the earlier INTERREG IIC supported ‘Via Baltica Development Zone than on the more recent INTERREG IIIB supported ‘Via Baltica Nordica Development Zone’.

In the case study of the Öresund region, interviewees from both Denmark and Sweden suggested that the ESDP has led to a change in planning discourse. Examples of this included the more open discussion of different development scenarios for the region (i.e. polycentric development versus central concentration) and the increased international orientation of planning. Interviews conducted with planners in the Skåne region and the Greater Copenhagen authority also noted that the ideas of the ESDP and transnational planning perspectives have now become an unavoidable part of planning work.

In the SLL+ SDP case it is noted that the elaboration of such a perspective and its translation into national and regional documents represents a change in planning practices and policies, as prior to this there was no spatial development concept for this transnational territory, however, the overall effectiveness of the exercise remains uncertain. In the case of the management of the Morava and Dyje river landscapes, the Czech Government announced its intention to support the ESDP in the preparation of new building and similar laws, while it is suggested that the principles of the ESDP are slowly becoming discernable in decisions of local administrations and in the content of local notices. In general however, the ESDP principles are more often discussed at higher levels of administration, research institutes, universities and ministries. At the lower levels of administration only a few of the ESDP principles are known. In the PlaNet CenSE case, the translation of the ESDP principles into Guidelines and Policy Proposals for the CADSES area is noted. These guidelines act as a reference resource for several national strategic planning documents. The discourse around the issue of European spatial planning was influenced by the ESDP and the earlier VISION PLANET network, however, it is acknowledged that planning practice was ‘hardly influenced’ because ‘only a very small group of actors was directly involved in dealing with this topic’ (p.6). Although the title of the ESDP is known by a wider group of planners it is not reflected that much in the action of practitioners.

In the Graz-Maribor cooperation the two primary national spatial-development documents on either side of the border (the Oesterreichisches Raumentiwicklungskonzept 2001 and the Strategija prostorskega razvoja Slovenije, 2004) deal with issues of cross-border development and cooperation and use the ESDP as an important orientation point. Changes in planning practices are seen as being primarily at the level of cross-border municipalities such as the

cooperation between Sentilj and Spielfeld, whereas planning 'discourse' (in the sense of a conversation) across the border has been developed through bilateral seminars, symposia and meetings of actors engaged in spatial and economic development with a focus on traffic planning and infrastructure.

3.6.4.3 Changes in spatial representation (images) and spatial development

In the Öresund region it was noted that the inter-regional focus in planning work has been reflected in the increased use of spatial representations that illustrate Öresund regional perspective and cross-border linkages and the wider EU spatial context. In the Graz-Maribor case the absence of common planning maps for the cross-border area was noted, however, a project has focussed on the digitalisation of cross-border maps. In terms of spatial development, the first phase focussed on improving the highway connection between the two cities although there is one section that has still not been improved. Over the past 5-10 years new 'nodes' have emerged beyond the urban areas along the road between Graz and Maribor. On the Slovenian side of the border most effects seem to be around the border crossing of Sentilj. Such changes in spatial development are however attributable to trends in development since the reopening of the border and since Slovenian independence in 1991 rather than to the ESDP *per se*. The PlaNet CenSE project refers to European visualisations from the CADSES perspective and tries to elaborate its own transnational maps for the CADSES area. In the SLL+ SDP case, changes in spatial representations are seen as being linked to the concomitant elaboration of the ESDP and the SLL+ SDP. Awareness of the spatial positioning of the SLL+ area is seen as having been stimulated by Europe 2000+ and the ESDP which underlined the potential of the area at a North-Western European scale and as a result, the SLL+ SDP might be considered a 'test case' for spatialisation and for the application of the ESDP.

3.6.5 Actors

Via Baltica has involved a wide range of actors since its inception in the early 1990s. Initially a number of Finnish companies recognised a need for improved road links, with the Finnish Ministry of Transport subsequently supporting the development of the corridor. The corridor was then recognised at the European level in the mid-1990s. The multi-national Monitoring Committee for the project involved the Governments of Finland and Sweden. As already noted, the INTRREG supported projects that developed the corridor have involved a wide range of actors from the transnational, national, regional and local levels, as well as partners from the private sector.

In the case of the ICZM plan for Lithuania and Latvia, the initial actors involved in setting up an integrated ICZM process were the World Bank and national Government ministries (e.g. Environmental Protection, Construction and Urban Development). The EU PHARE programme then organised and funded the execution of the project which involved the appointment of consultants who systemised and synthesised the results of existing research previously undertaken by universities, professional and research institutes, and Government ministries. The aspiration of the ICZM plan is to involve the national, county and municipality levels in the management process. This reflects the fact that each of these levels has competences relating to planning and the overall aim of the ICZM approach was to develop a multi-sectoral, participatory approach that eliminates overlaps and duplication of effort while providing opportunities to recognise the mutual advantages of joint action.

In the Öresund region a number of different actors are involved in the process of inter-regional cross-border cooperation and there is a recognition that the planning framework must be adapted to the idiosyncrasies of a cross-border region. The Öresund committee, established in 1992, is responsible for cooperation in the Öresund region, bringing together Swedish and Danish Counties and Municipalities. The Swedish and Danish Governments play a role as observers.

3.6.6 Conclusions

In a number of cases, the issue of causality between the ESDP and the approaches and initiatives adopted is quite ambiguous. In the case of the Via Baltica, for example, it is suggested that the ESDP exerted an influence on the development of transnational cooperation through the work on VASAB, but that VASAB also had an influence on ESDP principles. In this case the similarity of the VASAB and ESDP ideas is noted with a feeling that the former document has had more effect on Via Baltica than the ESDP. In the case of cooperation in the Graz-Maribor cross-border region, it is suggested that overall, ESDP application could be characterised as being implicit and that most policy approaches are coherent with the policy themes of the ESDP. It was not however possible to demonstrate explicit causality between these approaches and the ESDP. Implicit application is also suggested in the case of the Lithuanian and Latvian ICZM plan where it is suggested that although the policy approaches adopted in the ICZM Project are coherent with the policy themes of the ESDP, this did not reflect a formal or conscious attempt to apply or demonstrate conformity with them.

In terms of the changing influence of the ESDP over time, it is noted in the Öresund region that interest in the ESDP has recently been on the decline, particularly among politicians who were very interested in the

document 4-5 years ago. The ESDP's ideas and concepts are still seen as valid, for example, polycentricity and nature management and infrastructure, however, not the 'ESDP as such' (Interviewee, Region Skåne, September 2005). The ESDP has however played a role in putting such ideas and concepts on the agenda and on keeping them there.

The cases of transnational/cross-border spatial planning thus present a rather mixed picture in terms of the implicit or explicit application of the ESDP. On one level it can be argued that all of the cases contribute to the application of the ESDP as they are concrete examples of actors and institutions heeding the ESDP's call to, 'overcome any insular way of looking at their territory' taking into account 'European aspects and inter-dependencies right from the outset'. The cases therefore suggest a strong degree of implicit application even in a number of the cases this might be characterised as conformity without performance. The role of EU programmes such as INTERREG and PHARE is, unsurprisingly, highlighted by these case studies. In the Via Baltica case, for example, it is note that the influence of the ESDP has come mainly through the INTRREG programmes, which have been the most important tools in applying ESDP ideas. In so far as the INTRREG III programme is described as an 'important instrument for the application of the ESDP' (CEC 1999, p.39) and the PHARE programme is described as complementary to INTERREG, the application of approaches which are coherent with the ESDP through the medium of such programmes is arguably a form of explicit application. It should however also be recognised that a number of the initiatives above predate the publication of the final version of the ESDP and thus the cases can also be seen to illustrate the importance of local contexts and issues as well as pre-existing links and cooperation arrangements in stimulating cross-border and transnational cooperation. This is illustrated by the relationship between the ESDP and VASAB 2010 in the BSR area, which are described as closely inter-linked processes whose effects are difficult to distinguish from each other.

3.7 Conclusions

The role of EU funding for cross-border initiatives and Objective 1 areas was a key theme in many of the case studies, however, it was often difficult to identify its' direct influence on policy particularly on formal spatial planning policy.

The key policy theme that seemed to have captured the imagination of policymakers in many, although not all of the case studies, was that of polycentricity. The other themes of parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge and the wise management of the natural and cultural heritage have also been picked up in a number of cases. One issue revealed by the cases studied is that, although many of these illustrate a coherence

(sometimes a very strong coherence) between the policy approaches adopted and the key policy themes of the ESDP, it is often difficult to establish a decisive cause and effect relationship. As a result, in many of the cases while it was possible to gauge implicit application of ESDP policy themes in the approaches being adopted, the lack of explicit links meant that causality remained difficult to establish. This was the case in the three examples of informal spatial planning initiatives within the Member States, each of which seemed highly coherent with the ESDP's promotion of balanced and polycentric spatial development and dynamic, attractive and competitive cities and urbanised regions, but where there was no evidence of an explicit response to the ESDP. Similarly, in the cases that examined specific issues or themes within the Member States, with the exception of the Hungarian case, it was difficult to see evidence of an explicit application of the ESDP. In Hungary it seems that the ESDP theme of wise management of the natural and cultural heritage has been taken directly from the ESDP to help identify and fill a perceived 'gap' in the existing planning system. This therefore does appear to be a case of the ESDP having a direct impact and thus also of an explicit application.

The case studies also suggested a growing degree of collaborative working in the development of planning documents and initiatives. It seems that horizontal integration and cooperation is becoming an increasingly important theme in the development of spatial policies, however, such evolutions in practice were not necessarily attributable to the ESDP, and in many cases reflected other influences and considerations. The degree of vertical cooperation varied between the cases. In some countries, the sense of remoteness felt by regional actors from those who had led participation in the ESDP process on behalf of the Member State to which their region belonged became an issue. Despite this, the ESDP has been used by actors at the sub-state level as a source of inspiration and justification in the development of policy. This reflected the fact that many of the substantive and procedural themes of the ESDP correspond with more general current thinking about best practice in sustainable spatial development. As a result, it was relatively easy for actors at other levels to develop plans and initiatives that generally conformed to the ESDP 'way of thinking'. There was therefore often a good level of vertical integration of themes and approaches even if in most cases this reflected an implicit application of, and coherence with, ESDP policy themes. For example, in the case of the National Spatial Strategy for the Netherlands the coherence of approaches adopted was described as reflecting 'conformity' without 'performance'. The theme of a strong coincidence of approach rather than a clear causal relationship with the ESDP also emerged from the case studies of informal spatial planning instruments within the Member States, all of whom sought to develop multi-functional urban

systems in a manner which was coherent with the ESDP's promotion of dynamic polycentric urban systems.

On the basis of the case studies then there was no evidence of the ESDP having contributed *directly* to the development of new institutional structures. That is not to say that there were no examples of institutional changes, which contributed to spatial planning approaches, and which where coherent with the underlying philosophy, policy guidelines, and aims of the ESDP. Rather, such developments were not explicit responses to the publication of the ESDP. In some of the case studies relating to transnational and cross-border cooperation, for example, although new institutional structures have emerged these either pre-date the publication of the ESDP or have emerged in response to other more localised initiatives. Similarly, the case studies of informal spatial planning initiatives in Denmark and Sweden both predated the final publication of the ESDP and it would therefore be difficult to argue that they were conditional on the ESDP. In the case of the more recent (2003) Northern Italian Macro-region, it seems that the European spatial planning context has been more influential, for example, work carried out by the CPMR indicated that this area might be an emergent growth zone, which could help counterbalance the Pentagon. The two case studies of organisational change within Member States did concern institutional changes or innovations. In the case of the German Committee of Experts on Spatial Development (CESD), this to an extent can be seen as an explicit response to the issues raised by European spatial planning and development. Namely, how the division of spatial development and planning tasks will be apportioned between the EU and nation state levels in the new constitutional treaty. The title of this initiative is however somewhat misleading. Although it is described as a 'Committee', it is not, in a formal sense, a new institutional structure (e.g. like the Committee of the Regions), but rather a network of experts contracted by the Federal Government for a specific period (2002-2005) to perform a consultancy role in relation to a specific set of questions. Elsewhere, the Egnatia road observatory in Greece addressed themes which feature in the ESDP and also feature in the Greek spatial planning system, and thus can be seen as an instance of the application of Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA) through the monitoring and sharing information about the impacts of a new motorway. As such, these organisational innovations can be seen to be indirectly linked to the ESDP and to the European spatial planning agenda, and in the case of the Egnatia road observatory as contributing to the response to the ESDPs call for the further development of the practice of TIA. Both initiatives can however be characterised as instances of implicit rather than explicit application.

One role played by the ESDP and programmes such as INTERREG and PHARE has been to heighten awareness of the wider European spatial context in which specific territories and spatial development issues are embedded. The picture revealed by the case studies in relation to this issue was however highly varied. In some cases there was a clear recognition of the wider European spatial context and other transnational and cross-border issues, for example, in the cases focussing on cross-border and transnational initiatives (by definition). This was not however limited to such initiatives, a number of case studies in respect of its application in formal planning for, example, revealed that the wider European context has been an issue in processes of plan and strategy development. An interesting fact revealed by the cases was that the particular context of different territories, for example, in terms of spatial position within national and European space or political context could be seen to play a role in the degree of attention directed to the European context. Thus in certain 'peripheral' French regions their *spatial* context led to an emphasis on their position within the European space, whereas in the Netherlands a recently changed domestic *political* context seems to have resulted in a stepping back from the Europeanisation of the domestic spatial planning agenda and consideration of the national territory in its European context. Because of the influence of different territorial contexts in conditioning the degree to which the wider European context is taken into account, it is difficult to say exactly how much influence the ESDP has had on the extent to which this wider context is recognised. It seems however that in a number of cases, the ESDP has been one of the contributory factors helping to increase the attention directed to such issues.

There have also been changes in the nature of spatial representations produced to accompany spatial planning exercises. In the case of a number of formal planning instruments, there appears to have been a move towards the inclusion and use of more indicative kinds of diagrams. It is hard to establish the extent to which this evolution can be attributed to the ESDP, particularly as the ESDP itself is characterised by a lack of such maps and diagrams and few examples of maps and strategy diagrams were provided in the case studies. In the cases of cross-border and transnational cooperation, there has been a tendency to develop and use spatial representations, which take into account and illustrate wider European spatial contexts for the development of particular territories. Here the link to the ESDP and other transnational planning documents such as VASAB and the guidelines for he CADSES area seems clearer.

In terms of the awareness of the ESDP among spatial policy actors, the cases revealed that in most cases understanding and use of the ESDP was confined to a relatively small number of actors. Despite this, it seems that

more actors were actually aware of the existence of the ESDP, however, their familiarity with its contents and employment of it as a frame of reference was limited. In the cases that examined informal spatial planning instruments and initiatives within three Member States, it also seemed that there was little if any knowledge or understanding of the ESDP even among key actors. These cases provided interesting illustrations of how the ideas and approaches, which are coherent with the ESDP and may contribute in practice to its application, can be applied in circumstances were key actors do not have explicit knowledge or understanding of the ESDP.

The relevance of the ESDPs ideas was generally acknowledged within the various cases, even if there might be some 'macro-regional' variation in Europe in terms of how these ideas were received and their perceived relevance. There is some indication that in those countries where the planning system is mature and reasonably effective ESDP ideas have become embedded in practice (or were already inherent in the planning system and policies in place) while the origins of such ideas in, and their coherence with, the ESDP may no longer be so relevant. In the cases of the Öresund region and the Netherlands for example it seems that the political profile of the ESDP has diminished over time, even if in the former case, ideas such as polycentricity are still seen as being relevant. It was in those planning systems which were undergoing periods of change and evolution at the time the ESDP was published that it seemed to have had most impact, for example, in the accession countries, or in systems going through periods of reform designed to address perceived weaknesses in the system and strengthen planning instruments.

Overall, perhaps the most important thing revealed by the diverse case studies is that there are many implicit cases of policy initiatives programmes and projects across the EU territory which contribute to the application of approaches which are coherent, and in many cases highly so, with the central policy themes of the ESDP. In particular the case studies reveal that there are:

Many cases of ESDP application considered in the case studies are underpinned by EU funding. A question however remains as to how far this thinking and these initiatives penetrate and influence formal national spatial planning systems.

The case studies highlight many examples where the policy options and principles featuring in the ESDP are used in practice, even if in many such cases they are used without explicit reference to their *origins* in the ESDP. In many cases, this also reflects the fact that locally grounded factors and spatial development issues may result in an analysis of situations and proposed policy solutions that are coherent with the ideas embodied in the ESDP. This should come as no surprise as the ESDP was developed in a

collaborative process by the Member States and other territorial actors and thus reflects the issues and territorial challenges facing the territories of the EU in the period of the ESDPs elaboration during the 1990s. As many of these issues still resonate, subsequently undertaken analyses and policy developments often come to similar conclusions in terms of policy prescriptions. It also appears that in some cases the ESDP may have influenced policy debates without perhaps the majority of actors involved making an explicit link back to the ESDP. For example, in the case studies of the Öresund Region and North West England, there is perhaps an indication that the 'polycentricity principle' has taken on 'a life of its own'. In the Öresund case it is reported that polycentric development is among the key issues, but 'not the ESDP as such'.

From the case studies, it appears that as in the academic literature, polycentricity is the ESDP policy message which has the greatest 'generative capacity', however, the cases also served to highlight the relevance of the other ESDP policy guidelines, aims and options in more localised contexts

In a number of cases, the ESDP served the role of highlighting the spatial effects of EU sectoral policies and the need to think more coherently about a desired spatial policy

The ESDP and associate programmes such as INTERREG have contributed in a number of cases to encouraging spatial policy thinking beyond political boundaries

In a number of the case studies it seems that the explicit influence of the ESDP may be declining over time (e.g. Öresund and the Netherlands), however, it is difficult to generalise on this point given the diversity of contexts across Europe and the impact these contexts have on moulding responses to the ESDP. In the Netherlands it was noted that 'ESDP concepts are interesting when you do not have them yourself' with a suggestion that one respondent felt that the country had 'too much' polycentricity. In Hungary, by contrast the ESDPs emphasis on wise management and protection of the natural and cultural heritage was adopted to remedy a perceived *lacunae* in the existing national planning system. There is also some evidence in the case studies of different approaches and attitudes to the ESDP in wider 'macro-regions' of Europe.

Overall, the case studies provide a rich level of insight into the variety of spatial planning activities and practices across Europe which contribute either explicitly or implicitly to the application of the ESDPs policy themes. This tends to suggest that there is a degree of continued relevance embedded in the ESDPs policy ideas, in so far as, in the many cases of implicit application, if territorially grounded analyses are resulting in policy ideas which cohere with those of the ESDP then this suggests that there is

still validity in many of them. The case studies also demonstrated the difficulty in definitively establishing causality between the ESDP and the approaches adopted in different territorial contexts. This was so even where such approaches contribute in practice to the implicit application of the ESDP through a process of 'conformity' without 'performance' (i.e. the approaches adopted can be seen as conforming to the policy ideas and messages of the ESDP without these necessarily having 'performed' a role in shaping the thinking of the actors involved in the spatial planning process or initiative). The case studies also revealed the diversity of territorial challenges and spatial planning approaches to be found across the EU, they also indicated however, that certain commonalities exist implying that European documents such as the ESDP can have a role in synthesising and presenting the 'state of the art' in terms of achieving sustainable spatial development.

4 Data & Indicators, Web based Questionnaire, and Policy Option Tables

4.1 Introduction

Since the FIR IRPUD has continued work on the collection of data and indicators. The set of ESPON 3.1 indicators (see Table 12, p. 206 FIR) has been brought together and can be used for further analysis until the end of the project.

The indicators outlined in Tables 13 and 14 (p. 206 and 209, FIR), which have been discussed as 'synthetic indicators', have proven to be more difficult. The indicators from Table 14 were considered useful in analysing the variation in respect of cross-European ESDP 'application'. Having said this however, the 'polarity' approach still needs to be looked at and refined (or probably left out). This is a point for the up-coming discussions with the project team, as the results of the national overviews and case studies will provide helpful perspectives for this approach.

A general word of precaution needs to be stated here. The following passages frequently speak about the 'application' of aspects related to the ESDP, in particular in respect of the policy aims and options set out in the ESDP document. This must not be confused with the 'application' of the ESDP as such. Rather, what becomes obvious is a degree of conformity or non-conformity with specific aims and options, promoted by the ESDP but also by other discussions in the professional field[34].

As the data and indicator problem was obvious from the beginning of the project, discussion between IRPUD and the project team took place on how appropriate the application of a web based questionnaire (WQ) and 'numeric parts' in national overviews or case studies would be (p. 211, FIR). A positive decision was finally taken and IRPUD designed the tool.

244 experts are included in the control file for the survey, of which about 218 experts are external to the project. Not all national experts of the project team were able to identify a matching set of external experts. The questionnaire was tested before putting it on the web. For someone working in the field of spatial development, all answers should have been reasonably accessible, down to a straightforward rejection of listed categories or items. At the current time of writing this interim report, 107 experts had submitted their WQ. This results in a return quota of almost 50%. IRPUD is currently looking at the data sets to identify gaps or

[34] As many methodological explanations had to be included to better understand the presented data, all following 'technical' remarks have been placed in ENDNOTES instead of footnotes, to allow for a better reading of the main text body.

mistakes. Initial results (on the basis of 91 returns) of the WQ will be presented below.

For 25 Case Studies and 29 national reports, a table similar to Question 17 of the WQ has been provided and experts were asked to complete this table. This report presents the first interim results of the continuing analysis. The fact that these results are preliminary and that the data analysis has still to be completed however needs to be emphasised.

This reservation results mainly from the sample, which can be generated from the policy option tables. When looking at all policy option tables that have been delivered, 54% of all cells were filled in. The most complete sets of data provided the national reports from Austria and Germany and the case studies from Switzerland, Germany, Luxembourg, and Romania, assessing 62 options.[i] The two most incomplete sets of data were the case studies “Via Baltica” (Estonia, 6 out of 62 cells filled in) and “access to higher education” (Poland, only 9 out of 62 cells filled in). In general, the national reports were more complete than the case studies.

In what follows, initial results for parts of the WQ and for the Policy Option Tables in the national overviews and case studies will be presented. Further analysis of data, especially the attempt to identify typologies of variations in ESDP application and the attempt to analyse the impacts of the ESDP will however have to wait until the next report. It also needs to be emphasised here that further questions related to TIA need to be clarified across the entire team.

5 Web-Questionnaire – Application of Policy Aims

For this report, an initial assessment of a few of the questions in the WQ will be provided. Questions 1 (active planning levels), 4 (most relevant ESDP application level), and 6 (policy sector and level) are briefly introduced to highlight aspects of the institutional level, where the ESDP is applied, and to identify one aspect of the 'application' (the policy sector), which acts as a conveyor-belt for ESDP ideas. In addition, Question 17 addresses the 'application' or 'non-application' of ESDP policy aims in the country under consideration.

5.1 Institutional setting

The information in Figure 5 Number of active planning levels and Figure 6 Level of main planning competence can be used to identify one aspect of the institutional setting [ii].

Figure 5 informs us that the majority of WQ provides an assessment of the background of a planning system with three active tiers.

Figure 6 demonstrates that LAU2 holds the main planning competence, followed by NUTS2 and NUTS3. Overall, the institutional setting in which the ESDP operates is therefore one that is dominated by three-tier-systems, with a strong competence on the level of LAU2 local communities, and with a complementary regional layer at NUTS3, NUTS2 level.

Figure 5 Number of active planning levels

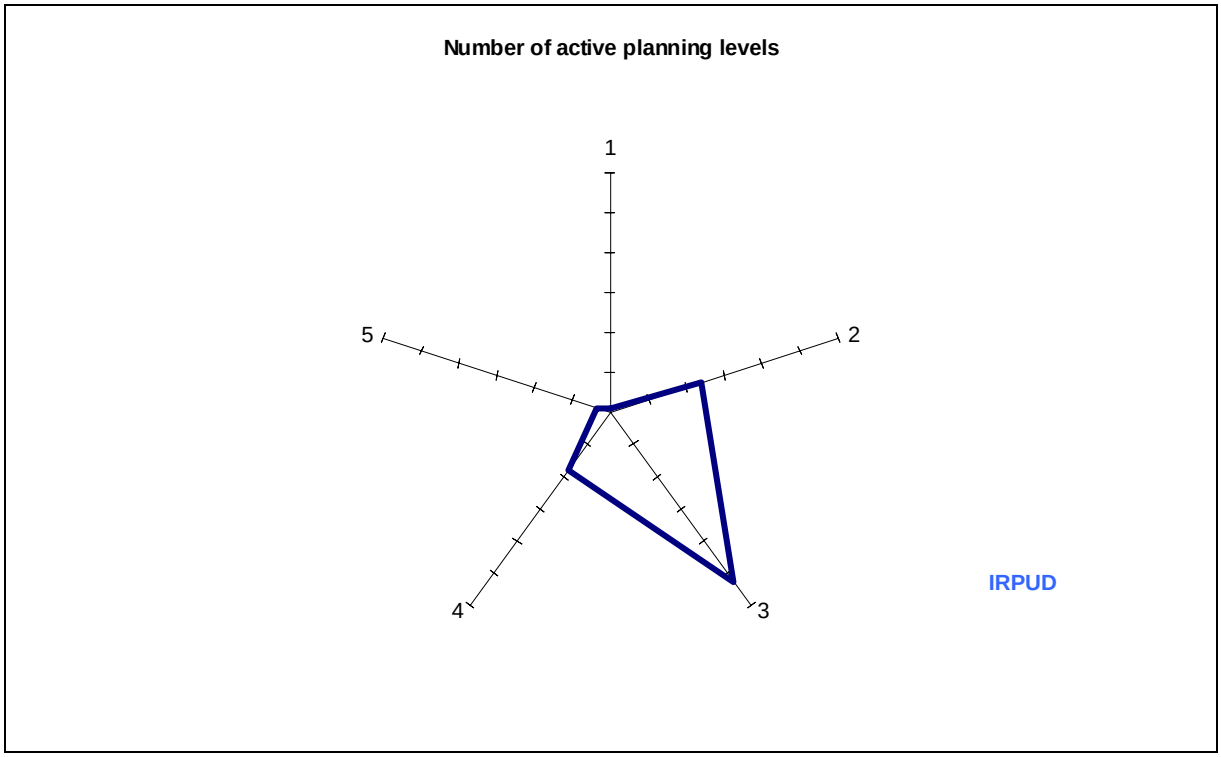


Figure 6 Level of main planning competence

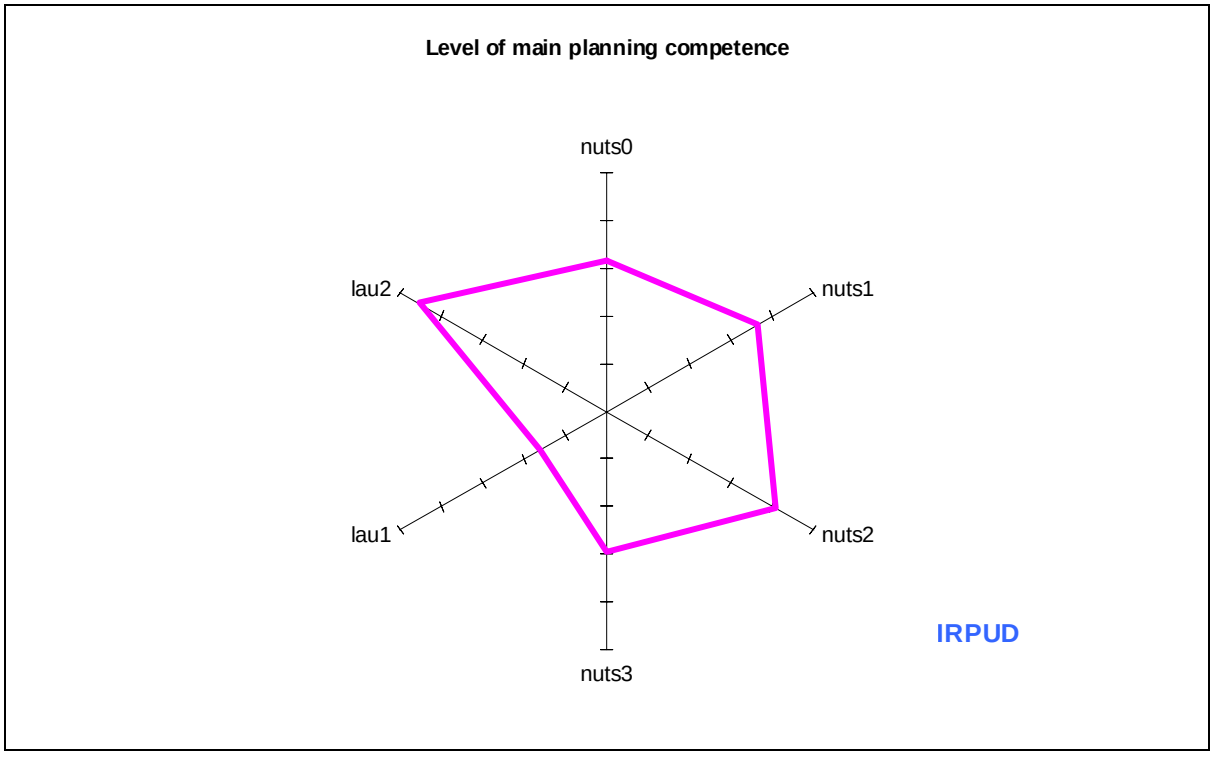


Figure 7 ESDP influence - most important Level

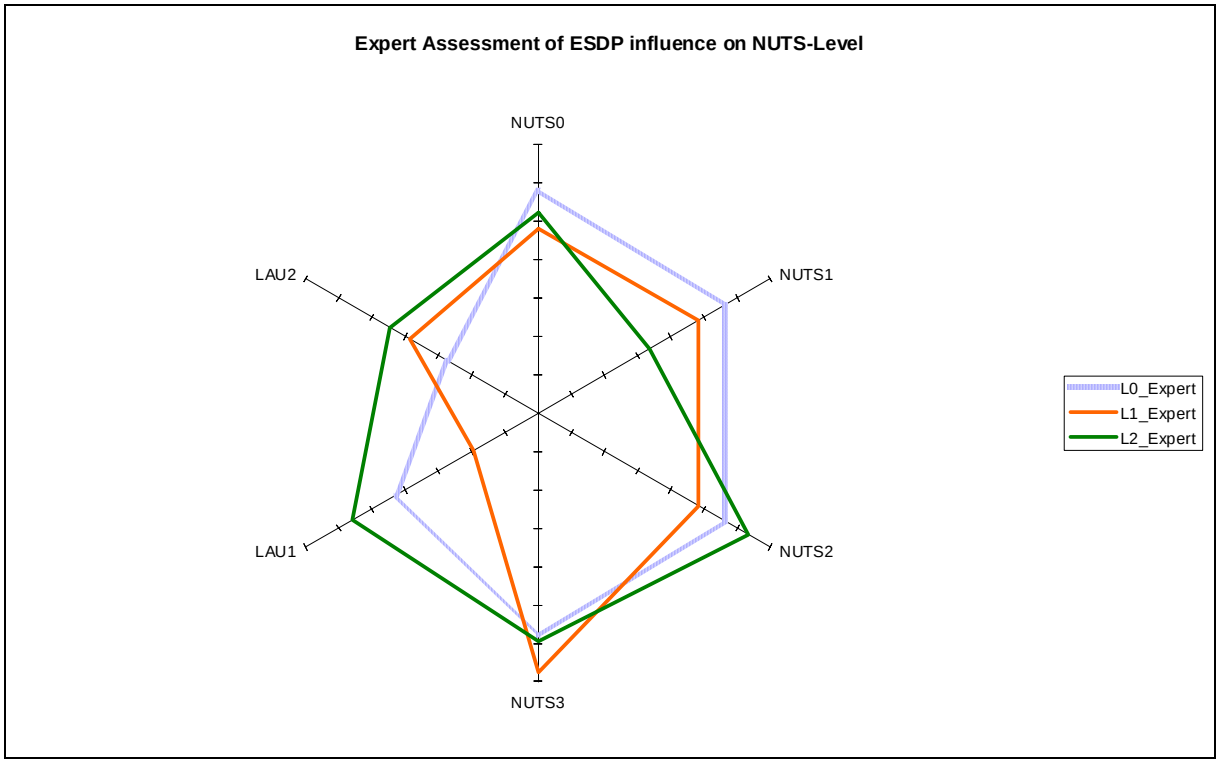


Figure 7 shows an assessment of the territorial level influenced most by the ESDP. In addition, the figure also differentiates between the level at which the expert works [iii].

The 'national' experts locate the dominating level between NUTS0 and NUTS3. The local levels follow by a clear distance.

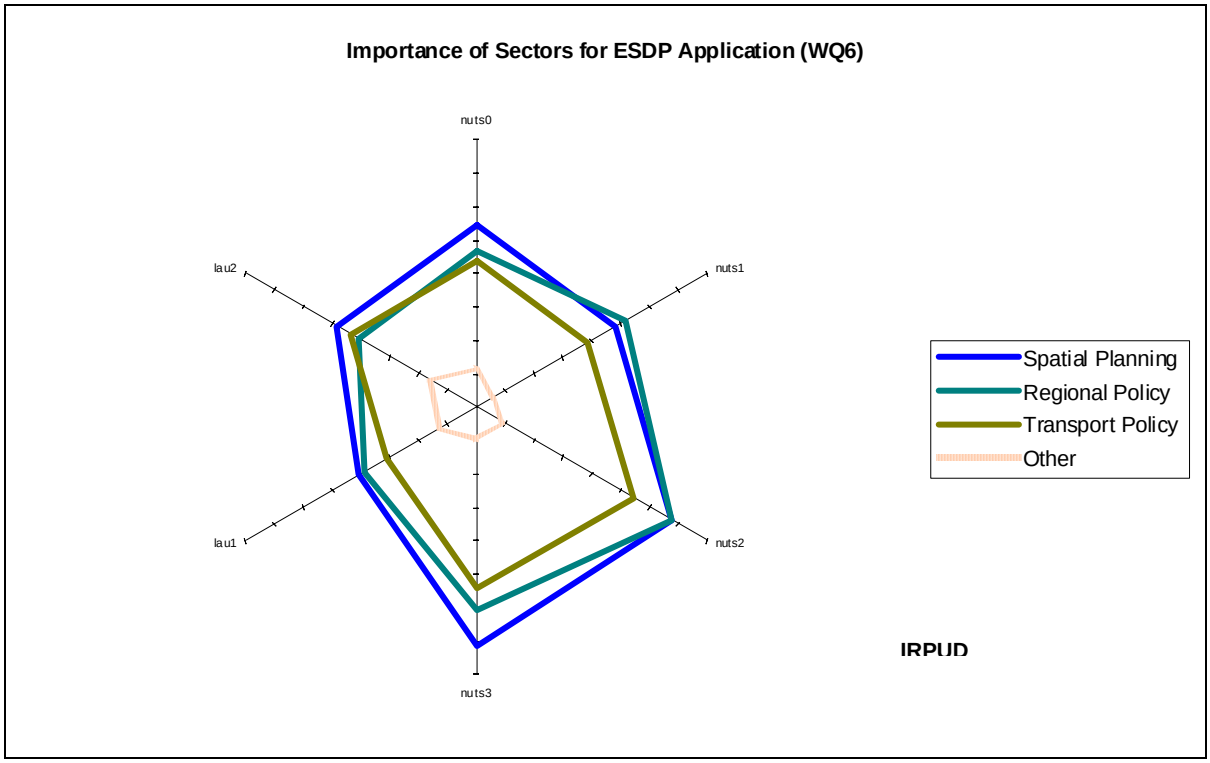
The 'regional' experts locate the main locus of importance at the NUTS3 level. Here, NUTS0-NUTS2, and LAU1 and LAU2 follow at a distance.

'Local' experts generally see the groups as being closer together and locate the NUTS1 level at a lower scale.

It needs however to be said here that NUTS definitions, e.g. in terms of addressed administrative levels, vary between countries. Therefore, a direct relation to specific territorial levels cannot be made here.

From the perspective of NUTS levels, NUTS3 and NUTS2 seem to be mainly influenced by the ESDP, also pointing to a clear impact at the 'regional' or sub-national level.

Figure 8 The Importance of Sectors for ESDP Application



What can be seen in Figure 8 is the assessment of the importance of the different sectors for the application of the ESDP according to different NUTS levels [iv].

The strongest impact per policy sector is expected on NUTS3 and NUTS2 levels. In order of ranking, Spatial Policy precedes in importance Regional Policy and Transport Policy.

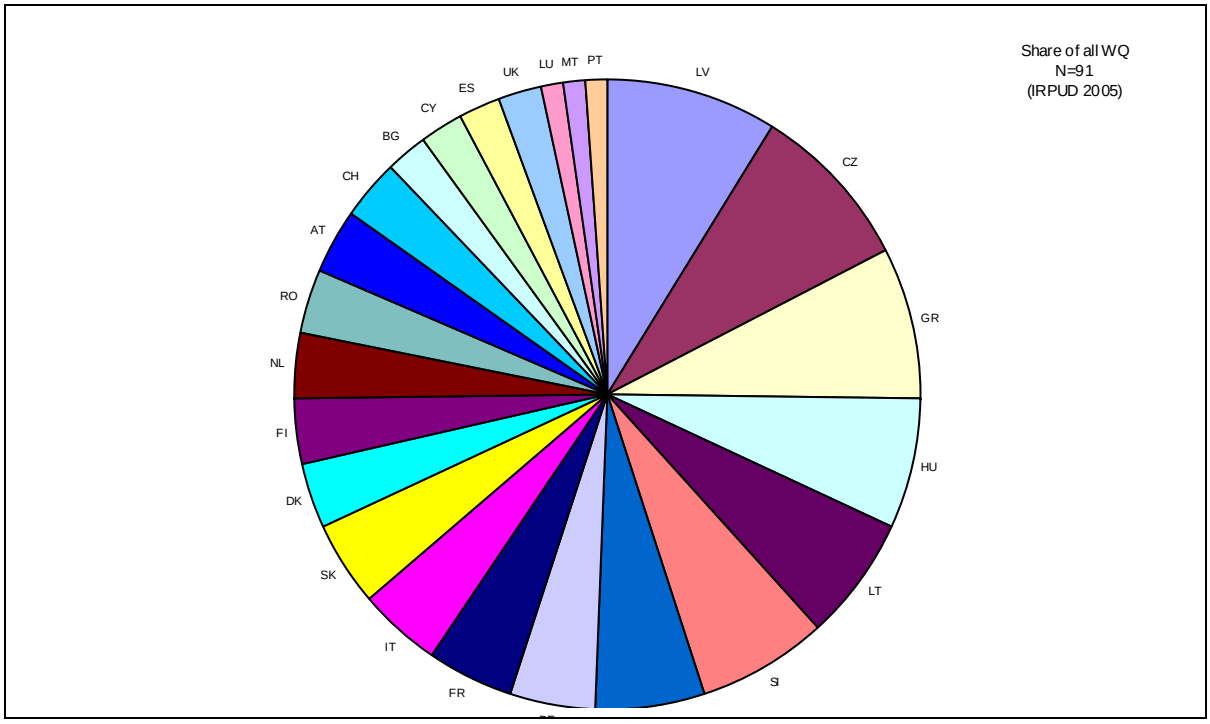
Application of ESDP via sector policies seems to be less important at the NUTS1 level and the levels LAU1 and LAU2.

Regarding the policy sectors, as was expected; spatial planning is considered more important than regional policy or transport policy. The latter two frequently change ranks. On the NUTS1 level, regional policy slightly exceeds spatial planning in importance.

5.2 Policy Aims

As noted previously, 91 Web-Questionnaires (WQ) have been analysed for this interim report, with 24 out of 29 countries represented in the WQ (see Figure 9). On average, and over all seventeen questions, 84% of all WQ provided answers [v]. 84 experts answered question 17.

Figure 9 Representation per Country



One general result in advance, generated from the 91 completed WQ: 78% of the WQ indicate that policy aims have been applied. 22% of all WQ do see the non-application case prevail. As can be seen from Figure 10 for the 'application'-cases, the majority falls into categories 2 & 3 (39% and 38% respectively). This implies that 'change and conformity' are rather due to the ESDP in combination with other factors. Out of all 'application' cases, only 2% see the application of principles being explicitly due to the ESDP!

As can be seen from Figure 11, the majority of 'non-application' answers falls into category 5 (56%), i.e. issues are still under discussion (for explanations of other scores, see Table 16). About 10% of all answers see the policy aim as 'not appropriate'. Slightly more than 30% of all answers identify a 'lack of awareness of the ESDP'.

Figure 10 Application of Policy Aims (Frequency of Scores)

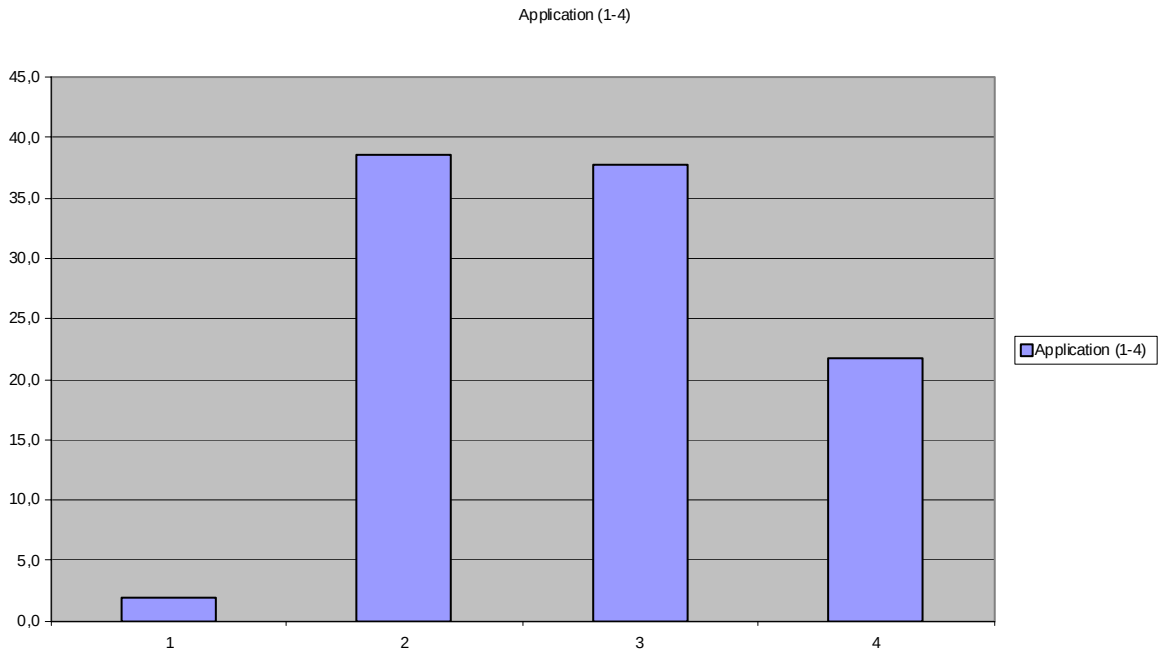
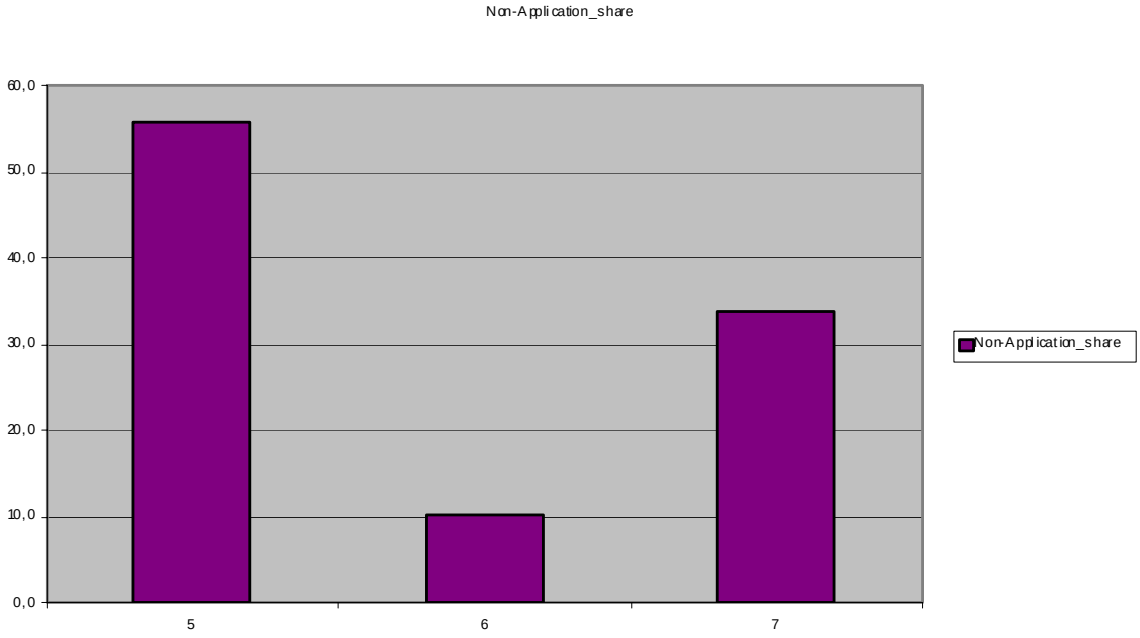


Table 16 Explanation of Scores

[vi]		
Explanation of Scores		
Application		
	1	Change & conformity mainly due to the application of the ESDP
	2	Change & conformity due to ESDP and other factors
	3	Change & conformity due to other factors
	4	No change as policy was already in conformity with ESDP
Non-Application		
	5	No change and / or conformity as issue / policy still under discussion
	6	No change and / or conformity as the issue / policy is not considered appropriate
	7	No change and / or conformity due to lack of awareness of the ESDP

Figure 11 Non-Application of Policy Aims (Frequency of Scores)



From Figure 10 and Figure 11 it can be interpreted that the dominant mode of applying the principles outlined in the ESDP is rather indirect in nature. What can also be derived is that there is scope to influence the obviously ongoing discussion about policy aims (Figure 11, score 5).

Figure 12 Policy Aims (Application scores against mean value, MV=100)

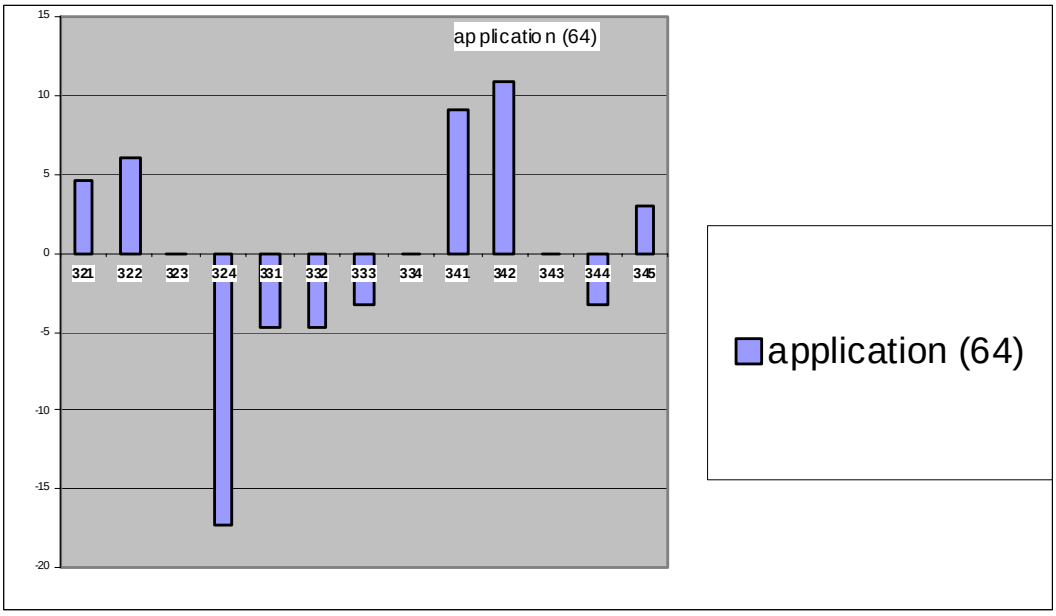


Figure 12 shows the different scoring for all policy aims when compared against the mean value (equalling 100).

A positive difference points to a higher degree of application, i.e. a larger number of answers falls into scores 1-4. This applies to policy aims 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.4.5. Policy aims 3.4.1 (Natural and Cultural Heritage as a Development asset) and 3.4.2 (Preservation & Development of the Natural Heritage) are seen as clearly having been applied more often.

A negative difference points to a lower degree of application, i.e. fewer answers have been placed under scores 1-4. This assessment is visible for policy aims 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.4.3, 3.4.4. In particular, policy aim 3.2.4 (Urban-Rural Partnership) seems to receive a less positive assessment in terms of 'application'.

Figure 13 Policy Aims (Non-application scores against mean value, MV=100)

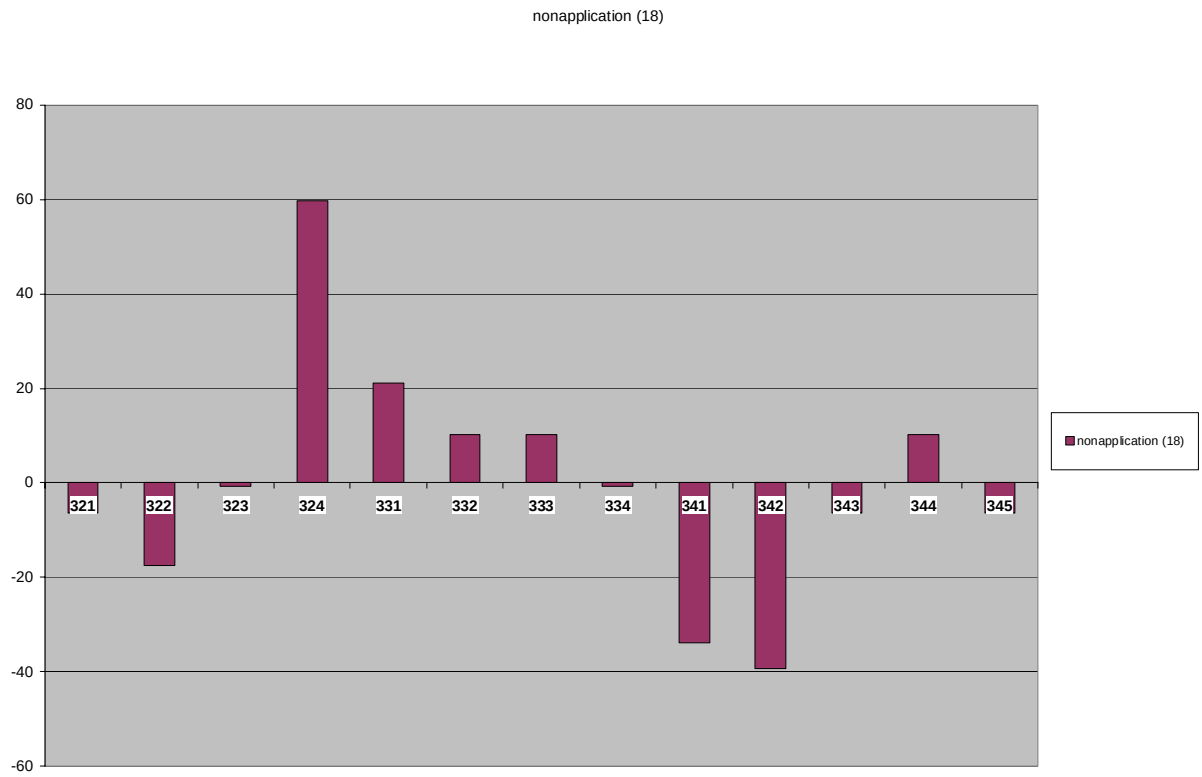
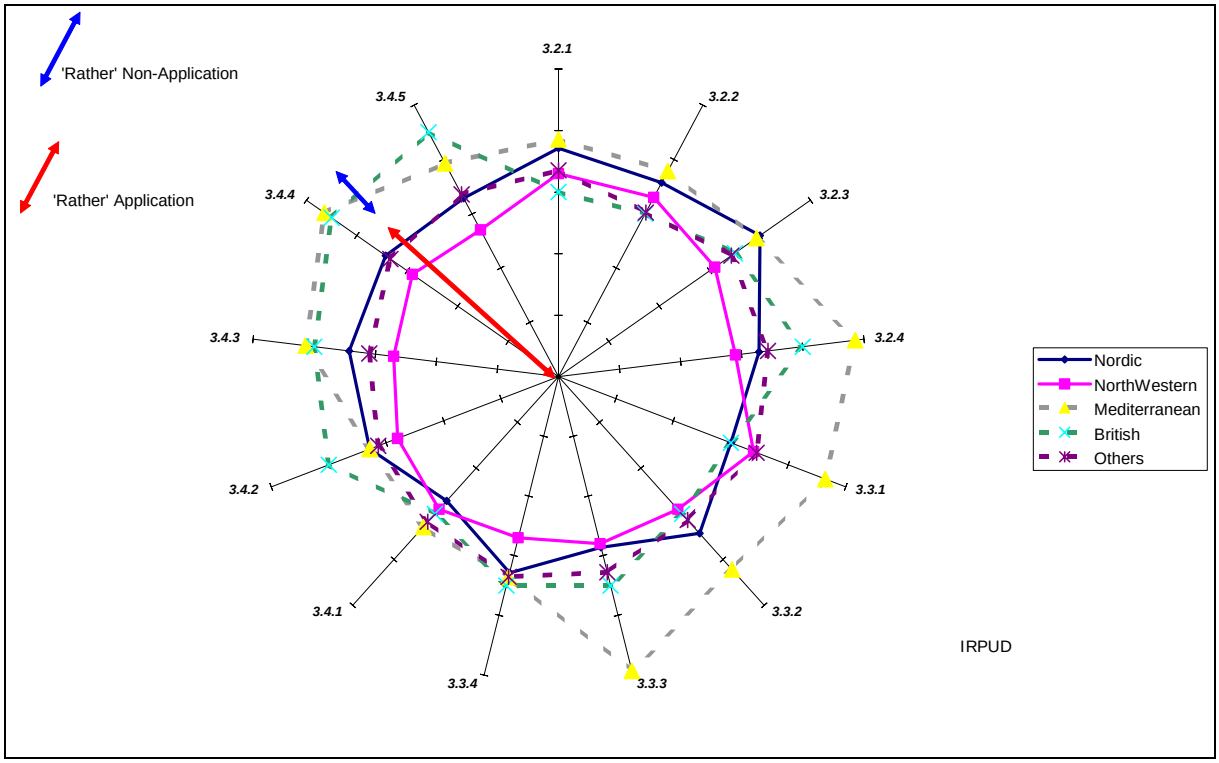


Figure 13 shows further information for all non-application cases. It is the mirror image of Figure 12 and provides a rather consistent picture in this respect.

Policy aim 3.2.4 (Urban-Rural Partnership) predominantly falls into the non-application category.

Figure 14 Country Groups (Perspectives) and Policy Aims



The spider graph above (Figure 14) charts the policy aims per country perspectives [vii] . An attempt to interpret this according to country perspectives can only be made when accepting distinct limitations. [viii]

The Nordic, North-Western-Perspective, and the group of 'Other' countries tend to 'apply' all policy aims. As has been noted previously however, the method of application falls into category 2, i.e. 'Change & conformity due to ESDP *and* other factors'.

The two other perspectives, i.e. the Mediterranean, and the British, are different in this respect in that, for some of the policy aims, a category 4 answer has been chosen, i.e. 'no change as policy *was already in conformity* with ESDP'.

When looking at specific policy aims, this assessment applies in particular for policy aims (cf. Table 17)

- 3.2.4, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.3, 3.4.3, 3.4.4, 3.4.5 for the Mediterranean, and
- 3.4.3, 3.4.4, and 3.4.5 in the British case.

Table 17 Explanation of Scores

3.2.1	Polycentric & Balanced Spatial Development
3.2.2	Dynamic, Attractive & Competitive Cities & Urbanised Regions
3.2.3	Indigenous Development, Diverse and productive Rural Areas
3.2.4	Urban-Rural Partnership
3.3.1	An Integrated Approach to Infrastructure and Knowledge
3.3.2	A Basis for Better Accessibility
3.3.3	Efficient and Sustainable Use of the Infrastructure
3.3.4	Diffusion of Innovation and Knowledge
3.4.1	Natural and Cultural Heritage as a Development asset
3.4.2	Preservation & Development of the Natural Heritage
3.4.3	Water Resource Management - a Special Challenge for Spatial Development
3.4.4	Creative Management of Cultural Landscapes
3.4.5	Creative management and Cultural Heritage

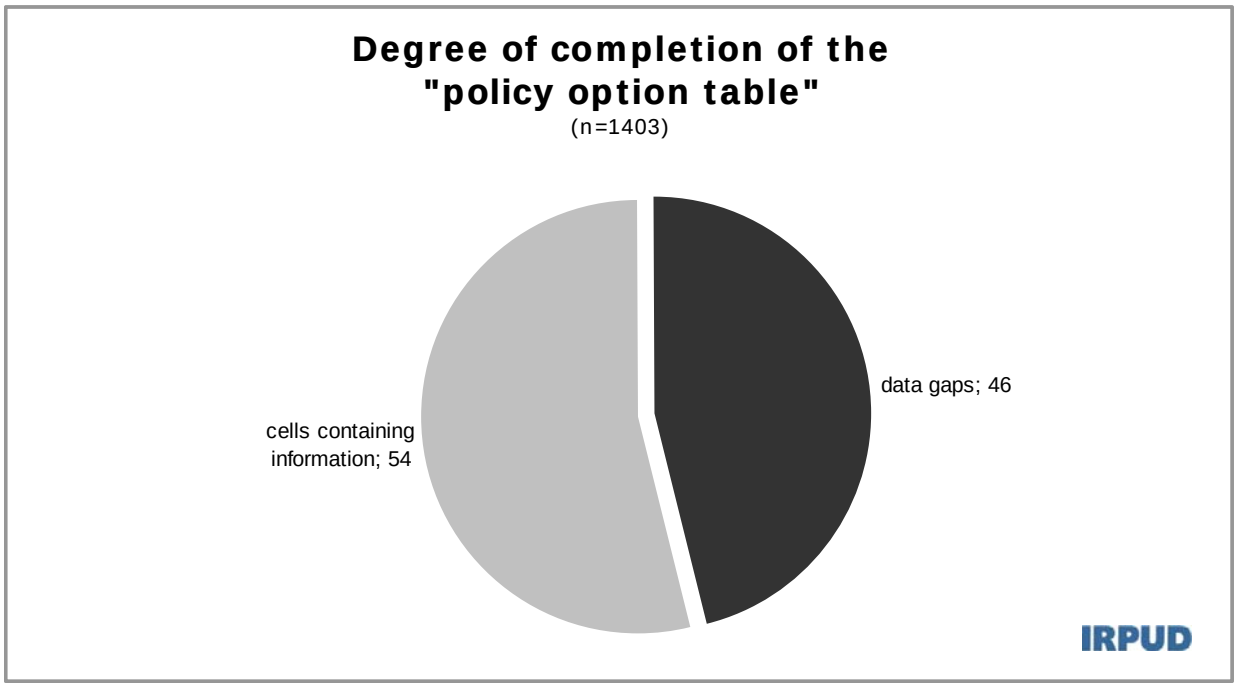
6 Policy Option Tables

6.1 Data Description

The data set consists of 25 case studies and 28 national reports. The national reports consider all EU Member States, Romania, Bulgaria, Switzerland, and Norway. Belgium sent three tables for the national report and was not included.[ix] An overview on the set of case studies can be found in the endnotes. [x]

The complete data set considered, 54% of all cells were filled in, 46% were gaps (cf. Figure 15).

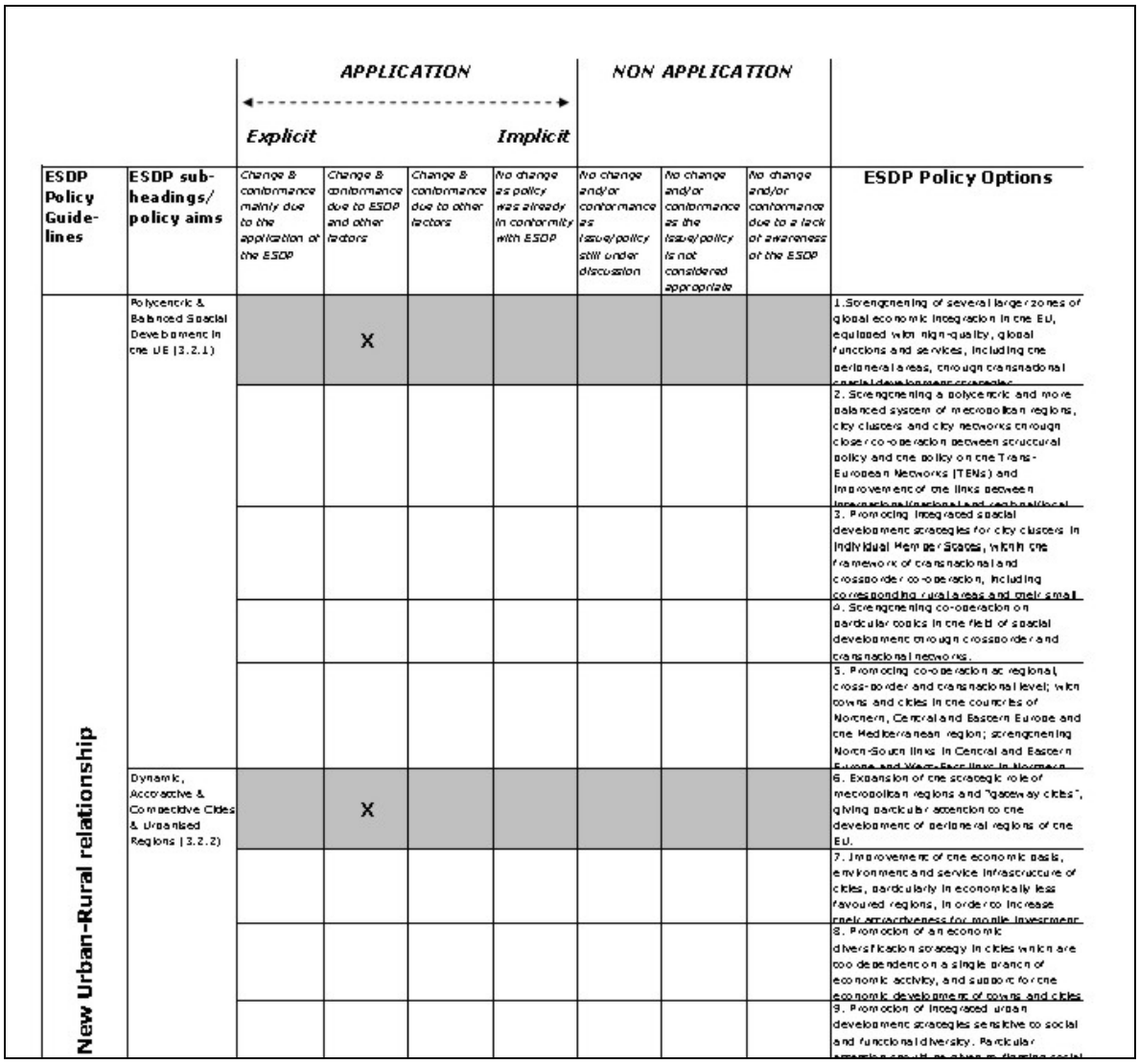
Figure 15 Degree of completion of the policy option table



The most complete sets of data were the national reports from Austria and Germany and the case studies from Switzerland, Germany, Luxembourg, and Romania, which each provided assessments for all 62 options.[xi]

The two most incomplete sets of data were the case studies “Via Baltica” (Estonia, 6 out of 62 cells filled in) and “access to higher education” (Poland, only 9 out of 62 cells filled in). In general, the policy option tables for the national reports were more complete than those of the case studies.

Figure 16 Structure and Design of Policy Option Table

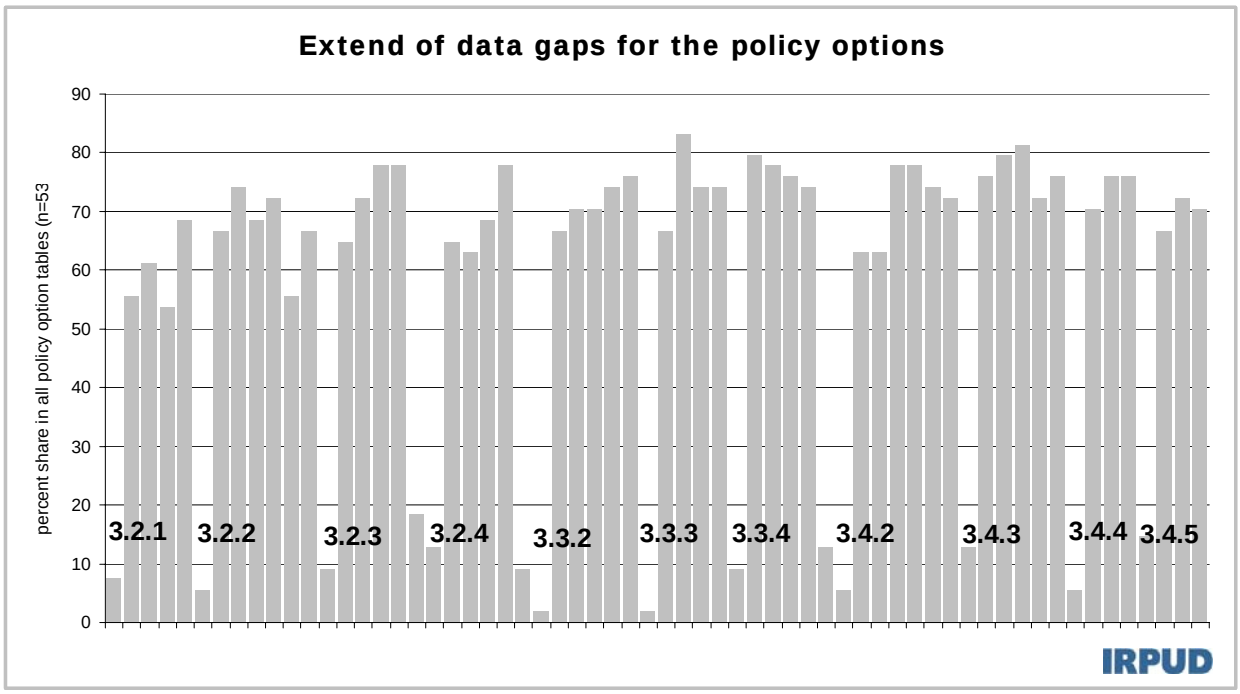


		APPLICATION ◄----------►				NON APPLICATION			
		Explicit			Implicit				
ESDP Policy Guide-lines	ESDP sub-headings/ policy aims	Change & conformance mainly due to the application of the ESDP	Change & conformance due to ESDP and other factors	Change & conformance due to other factors	No change as policy was already in conformity with ESDP	No change and/or conformance as issue/policy still under discussion	No change and/or conformance as the issue/policy is not considered appropriate	No change and/or conformance due to a lack of awareness of the ESDP	ESDP Policy Options
New Urban-Rural relationship	Polycentric & Balanced Spacial Development in the UE (3.2.1)		X						1. Strengthening of several larger zones of global economic integration in the EU, equipped with high-quality, global functions and services, including the peripheral areas, through transnational spacial development strategies
									2. Strengthening a polycentric and more balanced system of metropolitan regions, city clusters and city networks through closer co-operation between structural policy and the policy on the Trans-European Networks (TENs) and improvement of the links between
									3. Promoting integrated spacial development strategies for city clusters in individual Member States, within the framework of transnational and cross-border co-operation, including corresponding rural areas and their small
									4. Strengthening co-operation on particular topics in the field of spacial development through cross-border and transnational networks.
									5. Promoting co-operation at regional, cross-border and transnational level; with towns and cities in the countries of Northern, Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean region; strengthening North-South links in Central and Eastern
	Dynamic, Accessible & Connective Cities & Urbanised Regions (3.2.2)		X						6. Expansion of the strategic role of metropolitan regions and "gateway cities", giving particular attention to the development of peripheral regions of the EU.
									7. Improvement of the economic basis, environment and service infrastructure of cities, particularly in economically less favoured regions, in order to increase their attractiveness for mobile investment
									8. Promotion of an economic diversification strategy in cities which are too dependent on a single branch of economic activity, and support for the economic development of towns and cities
									9. Promotion of integrated urban development strategies sensitive to social and functional diversity. Particular attention should be given to tackling social

The policy option tables were in the main filled in accurately, though they did contain many gaps. Authors were asked to access the degree of application and non-application respectively of the 60 policy options formulated by the ESDP.[xii] For this, authors had at hand 62 rows. There was one row for every policy option and two more for policy aims without subordinated policy options (3.3.1 and 3.4.1). For this analysis, we added the 60 policy options and the two policy aims without subordinated policy options ***and speak of 62 policy options***.[xiii]

On the right hand side of the assessment table all 62- policy options were printed in rows, thus every author could assess them. The policy options were sorted by 3 guidelines and 13 policy aims. The first policy principle of every policy aim was marked grey (cf. Figure 16).[xiv]

Figure 17 Data gaps in policy option table[xv]



Authors were asked to assess whether and how an ESPON policy option had been implemented in their respective country. For a thorough analysis at the level of single policy options, it would have been necessary to provide assessments for *every* option in every national report and case study respectively. This aim could not be achieved.[xvi]

Unfortunately there are a large number of options (27 (44%) out of 62) that only a third or less of the authors responded to (cf. Figure 14). This applies to case studies (41 (56%) out of 62) more than to national reports (19 (31%) out of 62 options). Nearly all options of guideline 3.4 “Parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge” and guideline 3.5 “Wise management of the natural and cultural heritage” (apart from the first of the respective policy aim, and with small variations in the national report dataset) were assessed in the abovementioned critical degree that allows no reliable analysis. Hence, only options of the guideline 3.2 “Polycentric Spatial Development and a new urban-rural relationship” provide data eligible to an intense analysis. Our policy option based analysis therefore uses a workaround and is restricted to the policy aim level.

As such, the sample is based on only 12 national reports with policy aim assessments and 9 case studies with policy aim assessments. 4 more national reports and 2 more case studies provide complete policy option assessments. Consequently, 55% of the national reports and 44% of the case studies can be called complete.

Thus, the now following data analysis refers to filled in cells only and ignores the gaps. If less than a third of all authors gave assessments for the respective data set (case study or national report) this is highlighted. We assume that in such cases the sample is too small to make representative statements. This refers to individual country analysis where the maximum number of assessments is 62 (62 policy options) as well as to the principle analyses, where the maximum number of assessments is 25 (case studies) and 28 (national reports) respectively.

6.2 General application analysis

The following sections assess the application of policy aims and options set out in the ESDP document. When the text identifies the 'application' or 'non-application' of aims and options, this does not however mean that the ESDP as such is applied or not! On the contrary, to share some or all of the policy aims or options AND to keep a reserved position against the ESDP is quite common, as can be seen from other parts of this TIR.

The number of positive assessments exceeds the number of negative assessments by far. While generally only 10-20% of all assessments negate application of ESDP policy options, 80-90% judge ESDP policy aims or options to be implemented in the respective country or case study.

This general consent is weaker for the national reports. Between 70% and 90% of the options are judged as being applied, the average assessment of application per option is 81% (cf. Figure 18).

This general consent is stronger for the case studies where many options reached 100% while the average degree of application per option was 91% (cf. Figure 19).

Regarding the degree of application in the respective countries, there is hardly any difference between the national reports and the case studies. While 87% of the national report assessments lie in the range of "application", 89% of the assessments within the case studies state the same.

There are only two national reports stating that non-application prevails for the options assessed (Malta 29% application, Romania 34% application) (cf. Figure 21). Two case studies state the same (Denmark: Triangle Area 36%, Poland: Access Higher Education 38%) (cf. Figure 20).

Consequently, regarding the ESDP policy options the national reports as well as case studies state overwhelmingly the "application" of ESDP options (cf. Figure 20 and Figure 21).

11 out of 28 national reports state application of ESDP policy options for all (100%) of the options assessed (cf. Figure 21).[xvii] However, it must be observed that the national reports of Denmark and Spain provide few and generally incomplete assessments.[xviii]

It is therefore important to ask how the regional perspectives compete when grouped according to their degree of Application of ESDP policy options. Here we can use the ESPON regional perspectives formulated in the FIR of ESPON 2.3.1.[xix]

Figure 18 Average Degree of application of the 62 ESPD policy options according to the national reports[xx]

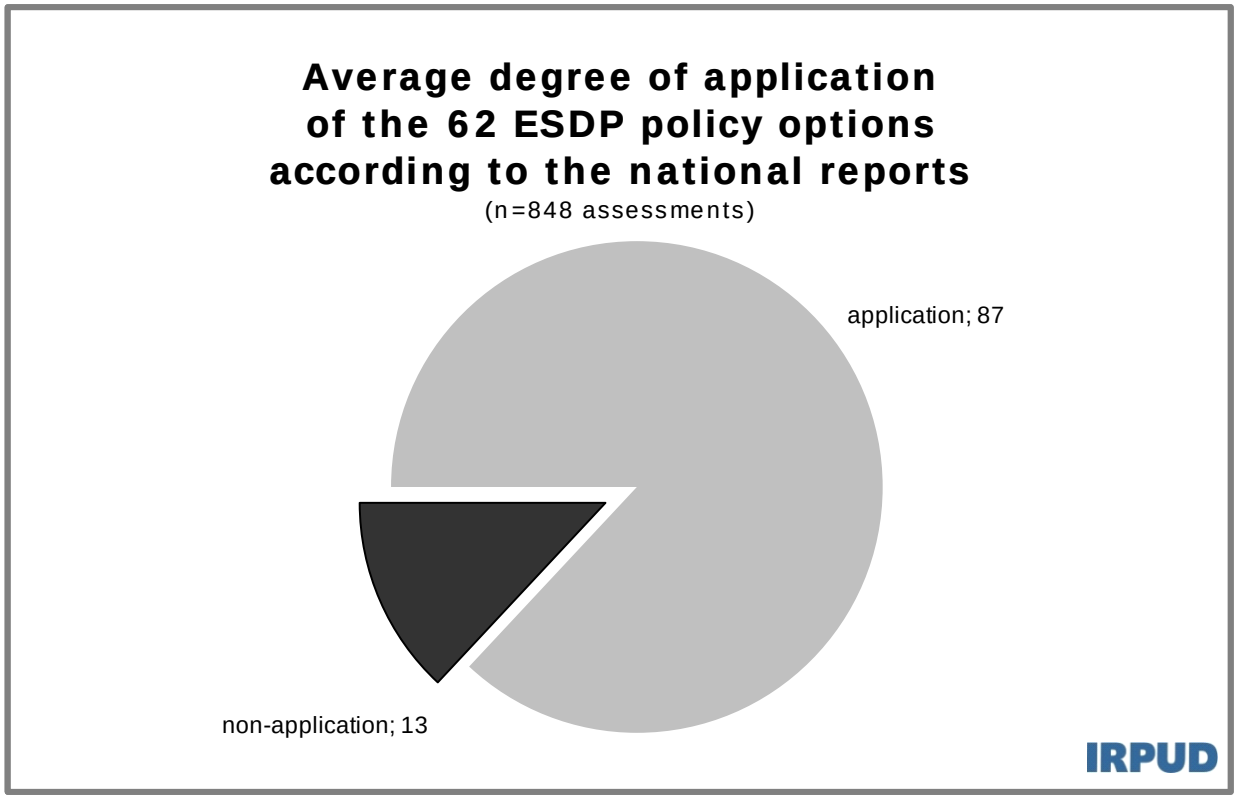


Figure 19 Average degree of application of the 62 ESDP policy options according to the case studies

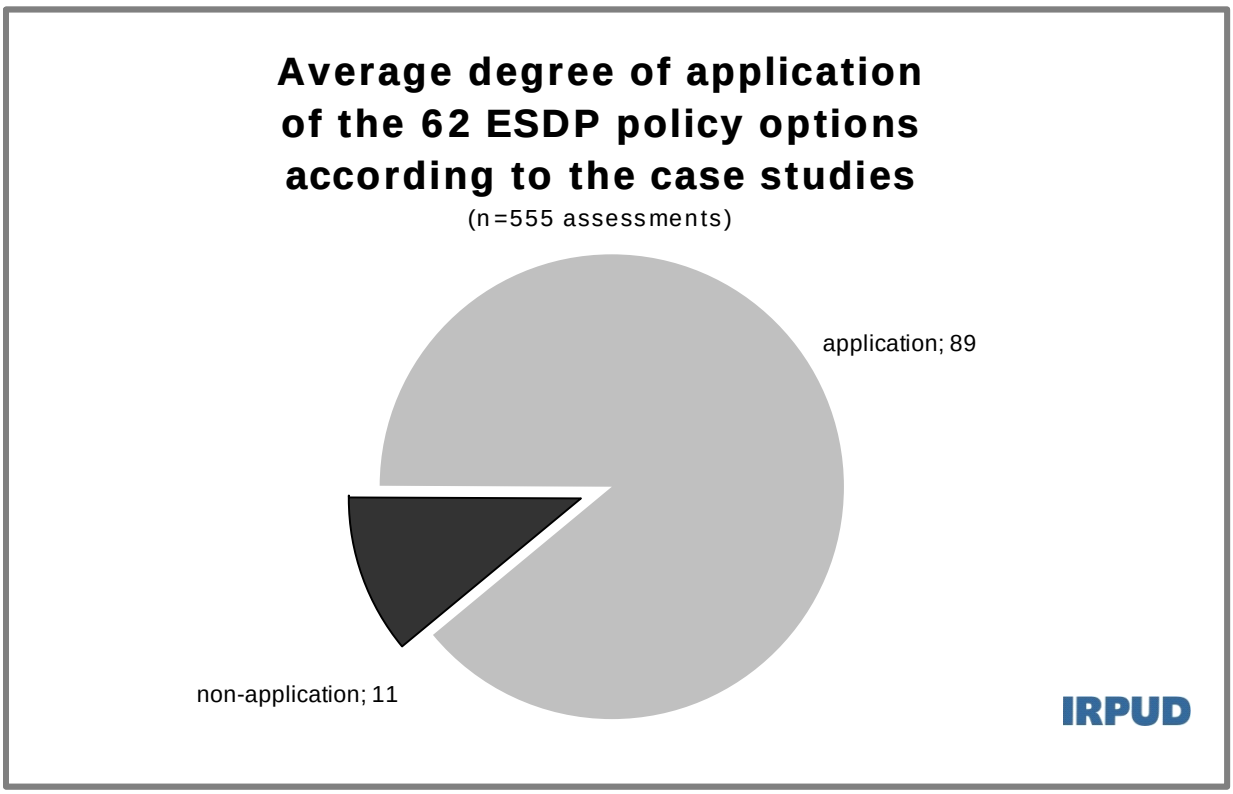


Figure 20 Degree of ESDP policy options applied

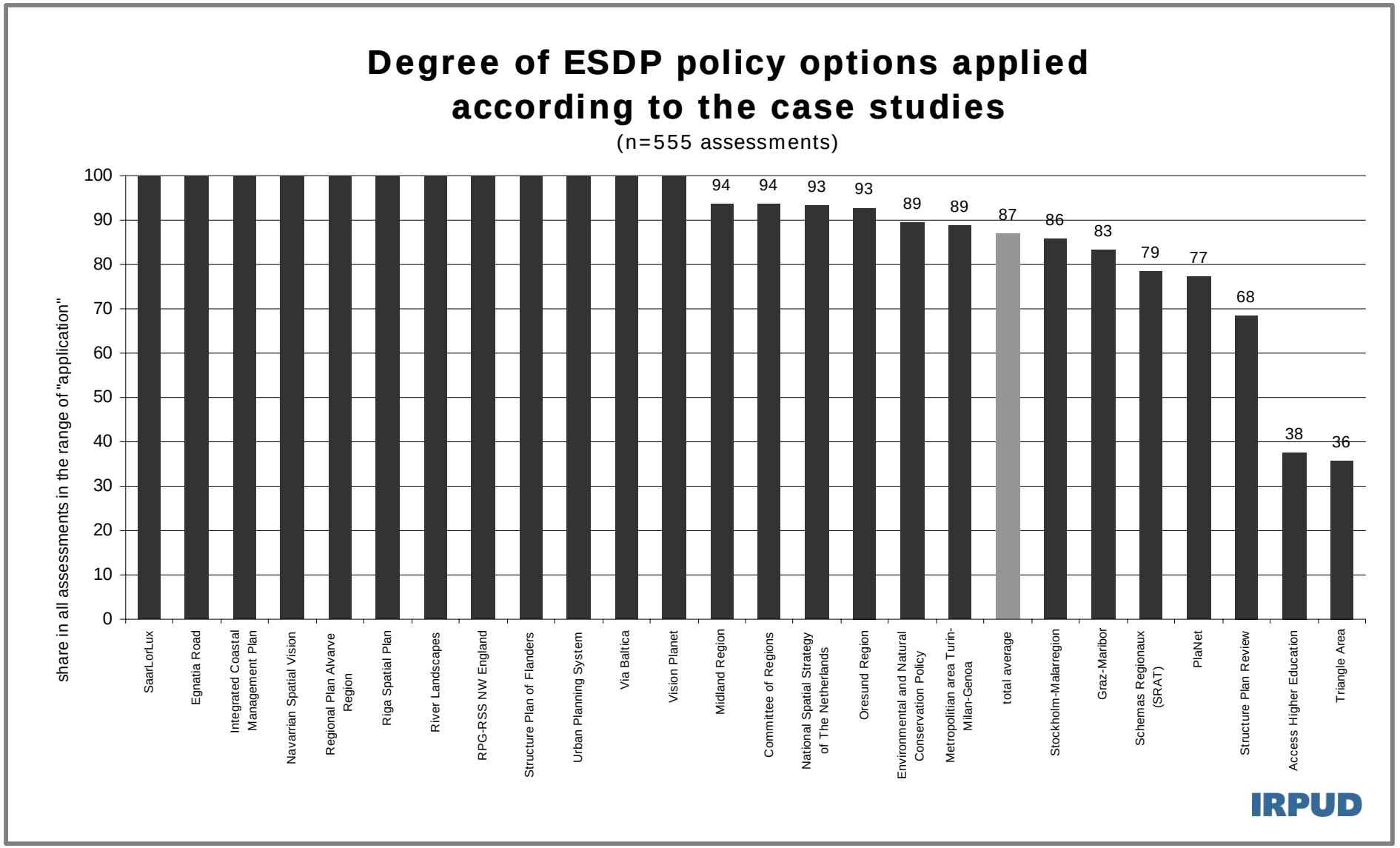
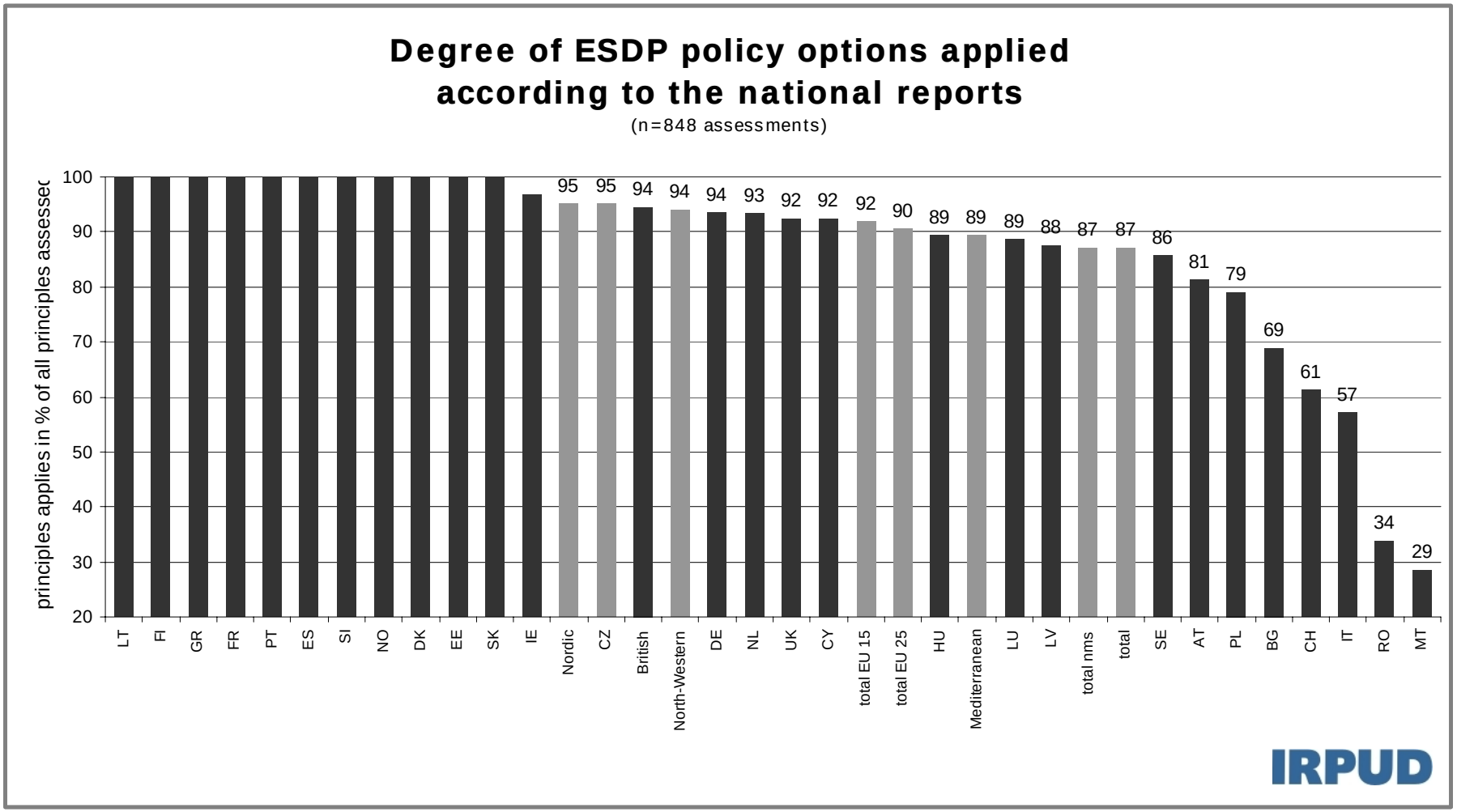


Figure 21 Degree of ESDP policy options applied (national reports)



Looking at the ESPON regional perspectives, all perspectives, except that of the Mediterranean area, show application levels between 94% and 95% (cf. Figure 21).

Table 18 Share of options in the range of 'application' for ESPON regional perspectives (national reports)

Region	Share of options assessed as "application"
EU 25 average	90
New member states	87
EU 15 average	92
"Mediterranean" average	89
British average	94
"Nordic" average	95
"North-Western" average	94
Total average	87

The old Member States show slightly higher degrees of application (93%) than do the new Member States (87%).

Looking at the countries within the ESPON regional perspectives it becomes obvious that all groups have a relatively broad statistical spread.

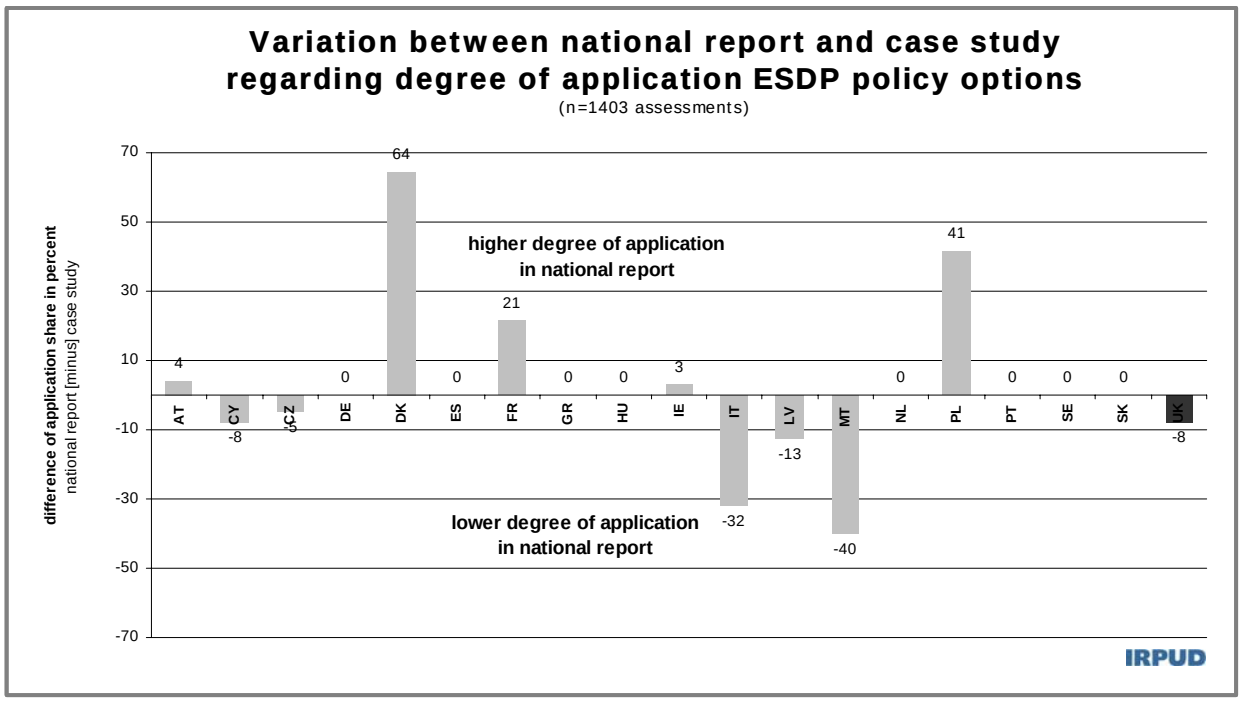
When considering the difference in the degree of application of ESDP policy options between the case studies and the national reports on a country basis, the data exhibits a high level of consistency.[xxi] Case studies deviate by, on average, 12% from the respective national reports (cf. Figure 22).[xxii]

There is however a significant degree of variation. Only 8 out of 19 cases show a total correspondence between the national reports and the case studies. For the rest, deviation ranges from 4% to 65%. 6 cases are below 15% of deviation, 2 cases between 20% and 35% and 3 cases above 40%.

Strong deviations mostly occur in all situations where the national experts have given extremely negative assessments for either a case study or a national report (e.g. Denmark, Malta, Poland).

Five of the case studies show a lower degree of application, while six show a higher degree of application than in the national report.

Figure 22 Variation between national report and case study regarding degree of application of policy options



6.3 Country-by-country analysis by type of application

It is interesting to know the reason (motive) for which policy options were implemented. These motives are grouped as “mainly due to the ESDP”, “due to ESDP and other factors”, “due to other factors” and “policy was already in conformity with ESDP”. For the national reports, national experts see it as follows (cf. Table 19):

Table 19 Motives for applying ESDP policy options (national reports) [xxiii]

Country/Region	Share of applied options in all options assessed	Sum of four columns = 100%			
		Change and conformance mainly due to the application of the ESDP	Change and conformance due to ESDP and other factors	Change and Conformances due to other factors	No change as policy was already in conformity with ESDP
Austria	81	0	2	98	0
Bulgaria	69	17	38	45	0

Switzerland	61	0	0	50	50
Cyprus	92	0	0	100	0
Czech Republic	95	0	70	18	12
Germany	94	0	0	2	98
Denmark	*100*	*0*	*0*	*15*	*85*
Estonia	100	0	0	100	0
Spain	*100*	*43*	*38*	*19*	*0*
Finland	100	0	100	0	0
France	100	0	64	36	0
Greece	100	33	67	0	0
Hungary	*89*	*47*	*6*	*29*	*18*
Ireland	*97*	*0*	*55*	*7*	*38*
Italy	57	0	37	13	50
Lithuania	100	0	100	0	0
Luxemburg	89	29	55	0	16
Latvia	88	14	14	72	0
Malta	29	0	0	50	50
The Netherlands	93	0	0	0	100
Norway	100	0	21	14	64
Poland	79	0	67	13	20
Romania	100	0	48	48	4
Sweden	34	0	8	42	50
Slovenia	100	72	22	6	0
Slovakia	100	59	0	0	41
United Kingdom	92	0	25	75	0
Total average	87	11	**32**	**31**	26
EU 25 average	90	12	**33**	29	25
new member states	87	19	28	**39**	14
EU 15 average	92	8	**37**	22	33
“Nordic” average	95	0	36	19	**45**

"Mediterranean" av.	89	19	**52**	10	20
British average	94	0	**40**	**41**	19
"North-Western" av.	94	7	30	9	**54**

Looking for the most prevalent motive of application, it becomes obvious that: "Change and conformity due to ESDP and other factors" (32%) and: "Change and Conformity due to other factors" (31%) have about the same strength, while: "No change as policy was already in conformity with ESDP" (26%) and, most importantly: "Change and conformity mainly due to the application of the ESDP" (11%) are considered to a much lesser degree (cf. Table 19 and Figure 23).

The four motives of application can also be aggregated into two new groups. The group of "explicit application" considers the motives, "Change and conformity mainly due to the ESDP" and "change and conformity due to the ESDP and other factors". The group of "implicit application" includes "change and conformity mainly due to other factors" and "no change as policy was already in conformity with ESDP". While the first group entails active consideration of ESDP policy options, the second entails fulfilling ESDP policy option without referring to the ESDP.

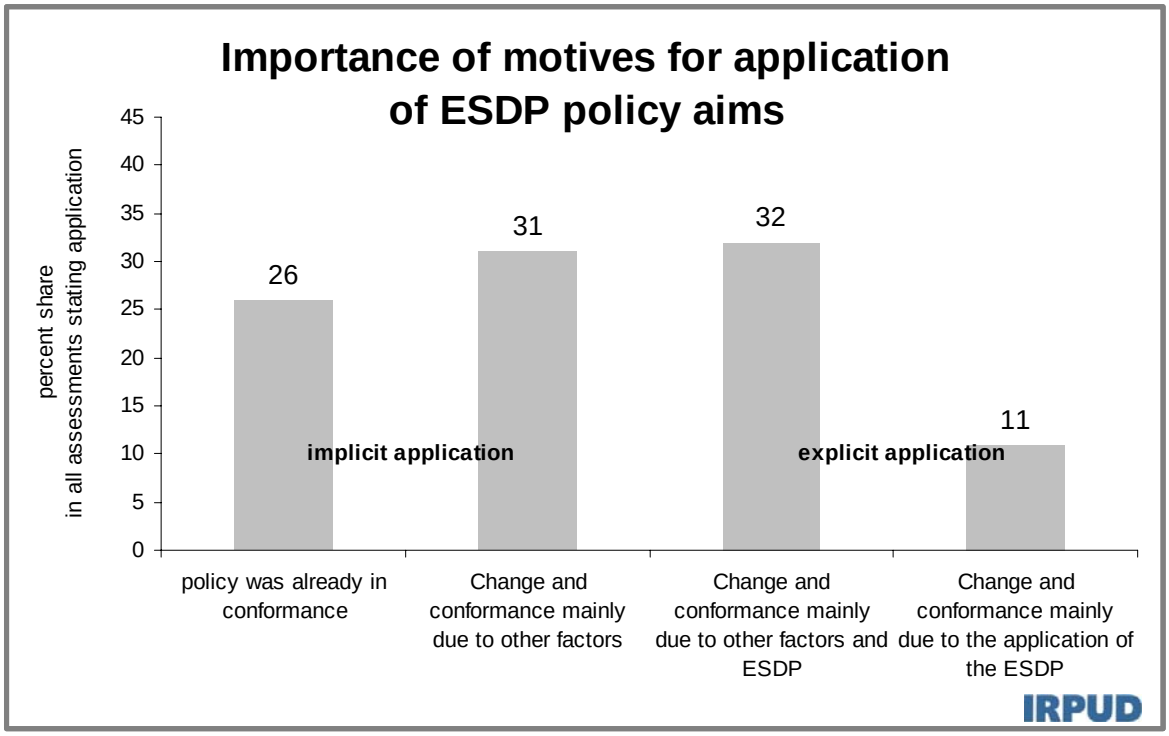
43% of all assessments are in the range of "explicit application" of the ESDP. In these cases, policy acted at least partly with the knowledge and the will to apply ESDP policy aims. Slightly more than half, or 57% of all assessments, judge that Application of ESDP policy aims happened "implicitly", i.e. policies are coherent with ESDP policy aims as a result of general considerations, and thus are *not* due to the explicit desire to achieve conformity with the ESDP.[xxiv]

When asking for explicit and implicit application of ESDP policy options, countries and regional clusters have to be looked at more closely. The motive of application: "Change and conformity mainly due to the application of the ESDP" stands for the most explicit application of ESDP policy options. When looking at the single countries and regional groups, this motive is strongest in Slovenia (72%), Slovakia (59%), Spain (43%), and Hungary (47%). Spain and Hungary however provided only partially reliable material (cf. footnote for Table 19). For 19 out of the 28 countries, this motive had no relevance at all (0%) (cf. Figure 24).

As the conclusions of both the national reports and the case studies also show (cf. work of other ESPON 2.3.1. partners), this motive of application is particularly important for the new Member States. Half of the states assessing relevance for this motive of application are new Member States,

while another is an accession country. Consequently, 19% of the principles that have been judged as "applied" for the new member States state: "Change and conformity mainly due to application of the ESDP".

Figure 23 Importance of motives for applying ESDP policy aims



As regards the ESPON regional perspectives, the Mediterranean is the strongest (19%).[xxv] For all other perspectives, its importance is very low. In the North-Western perspective, 7% of the assessments stating "application" fall under this motive.[xxvi] For the Nordic and the British perspective, this option carries no importance at all (cf. Figure 24).

The second motive of explicit application is represented by the application motive: "Change and conformance due to ESDP and other factors" (cf. Figure 25). As highlighted previously, this is one of the two prevailing policy aims. Finland and Lithuania judge all of their "application" assessments to be part of this motive.

Regarding groups of countries, this motive is most important for those from the Mediterranean perspective.

Adding the two motives of application mentioned above, we receive the degree of importance of "explicit application" in all assessments, that is to say, 42% in total (cf. Figure 26). Finland, Lithuania, and Greece have the highest conformity rates in applying ESDP policy aims, each reaching 100% respectively.

Among the ESPON regional perspectives, explicit application is most important for the Mediterranean perspective (71%). In addition, the new Member States (47%) reach application shares slightly above the average.

Apart from Ireland (55%) and THE two accession countries (Bulgaria and Romania), all countries above the average value belong to one of the ESPON regional perspectives named above.

Figure 24 Change and conformance mainly due to application of the ESDP

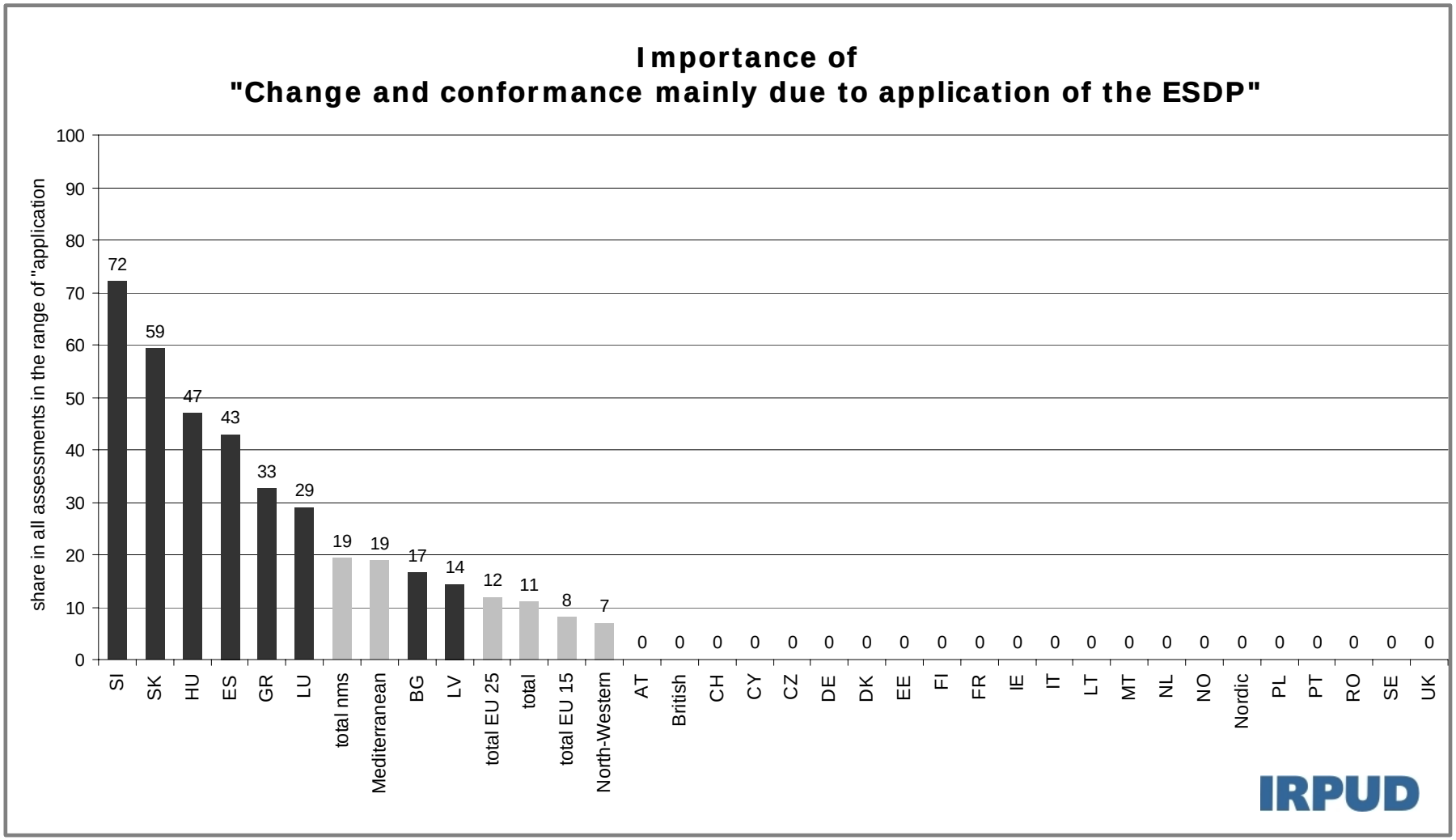


Figure 25 Change and conformance due to ESDP and other factors

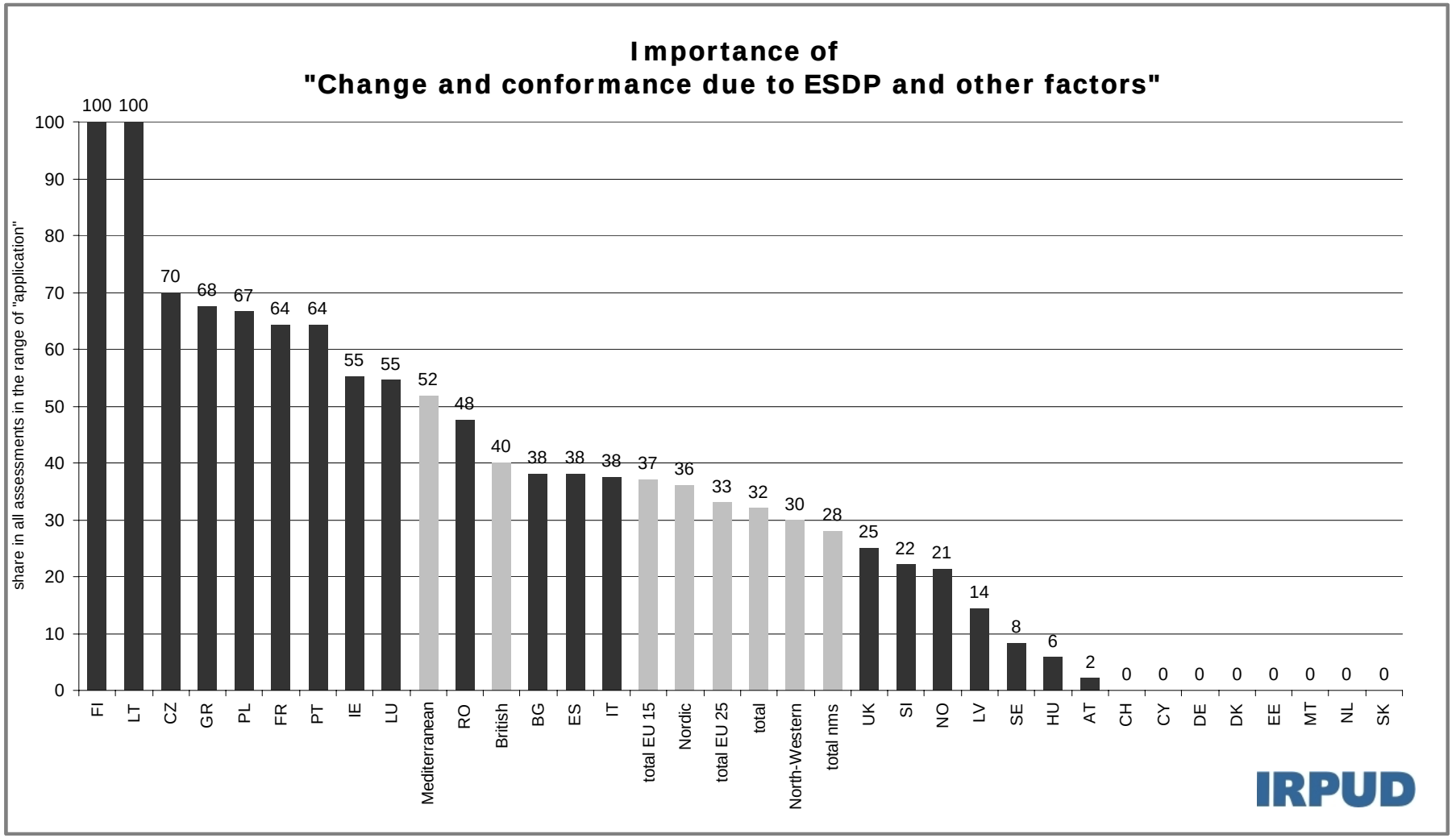
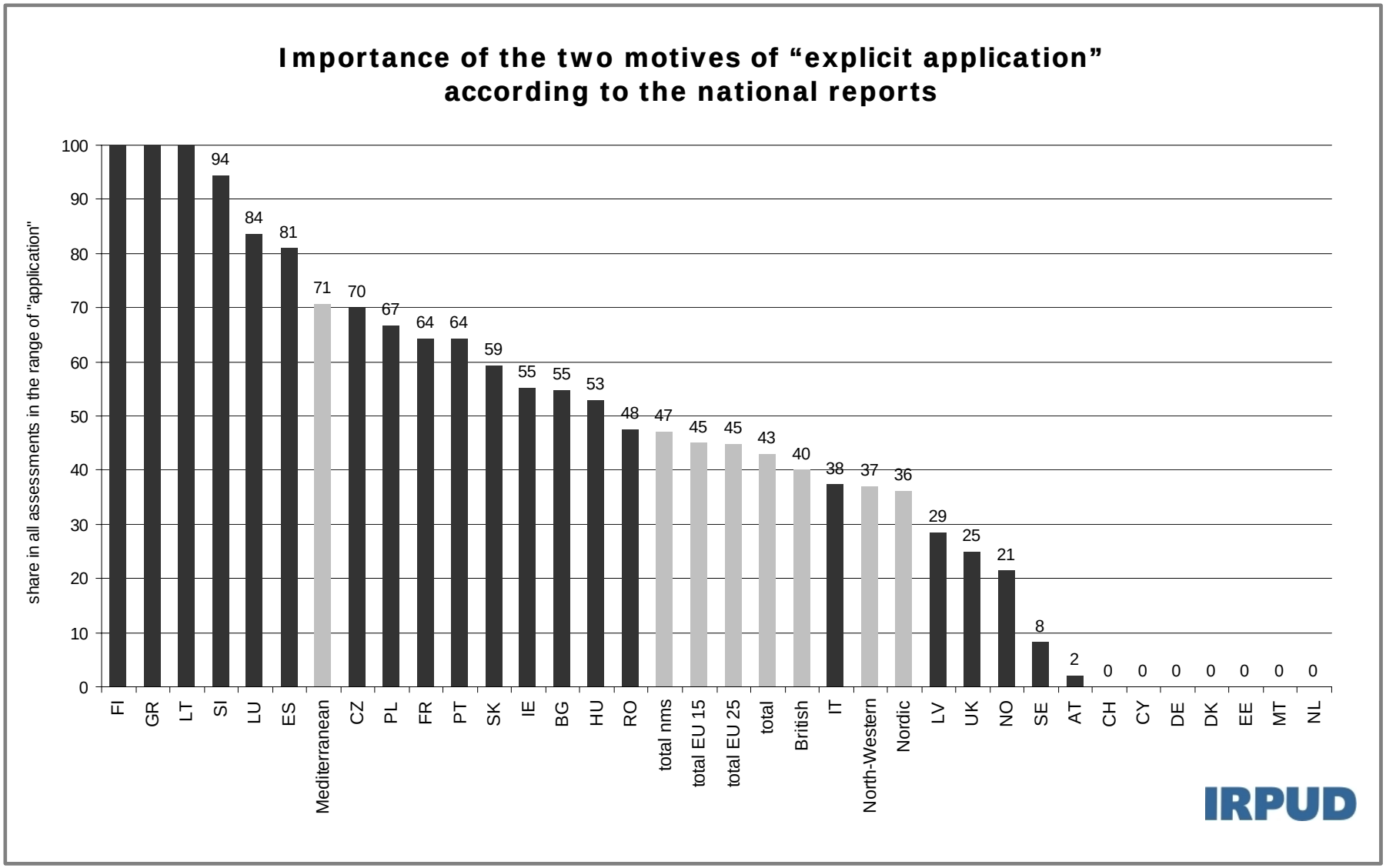


Figure 26 'Explicit application' of ESDP policy options



The second set of possible motives for the application of ESDP policy aims can be related to the group of “implicit application” (cf. Figure 27).

The highest levels of conformity before the ESDP was released was assessed for The Netherlands (100%), Germany (98%), Denmark (85%) and Norway (64%) (cf. Figure 28). A very interesting aspect here is that the Norwegian national report judges the fulfilment of many ESDP options before ESDP adoption, even though Norway is not as yet an EU Member State.[xxvii] For 13 countries, this motive had no meaning at all.

Looking at the ESPON regional perspectives, the Nordic countries and the North-Western perspective assess the highest application of ESDP options before adoption of the ESDP. In the Nordic perspective, this is due to the high average importance of the option (Finland is however excluded from this pattern). In the North-Western perspective, this is due to the strong value of Germany and The Netherlands. The Mediterranean and the British perspectives respectively consider this motive least important.

By adding up the values for the two motives of application, we generate a cumulative value for implicit application (cf. Figure 29). It is the reverse situation of Figure 26, and shows that for the North-Western perspective, as well as for the British and the Nordic perspectives, implicit application of ESDP policy options prevails. The group of the new Member States shows a 53% share of implicit application. This cannot however be seen as a clear signal towards any of the “implicit” or “explicit” motives of application (the group members have to be analysed on a country-by-country basis).

Figure 27 Change and conformance due to other factors

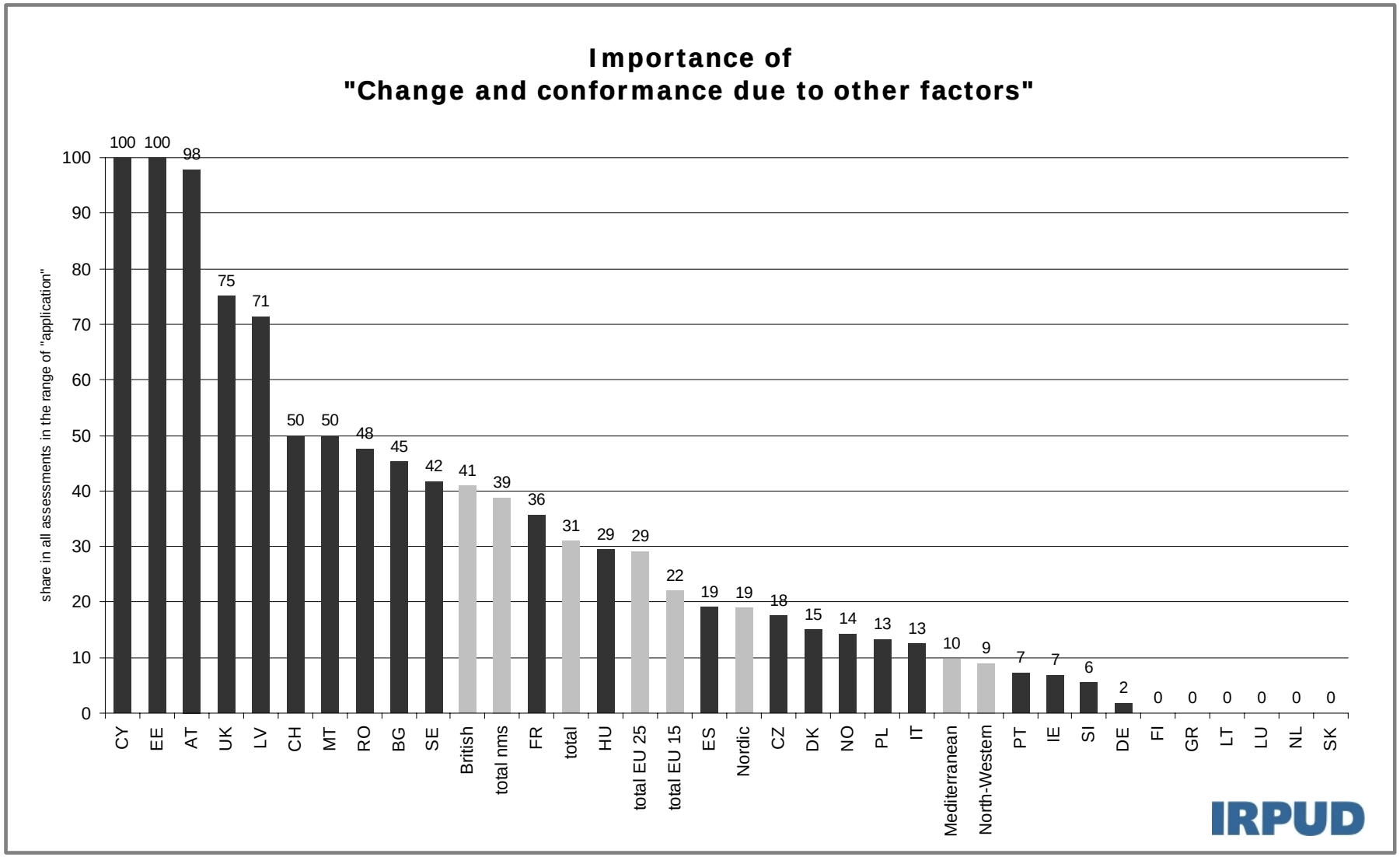


Figure 28 No change as policy was already in conformity with ESDP

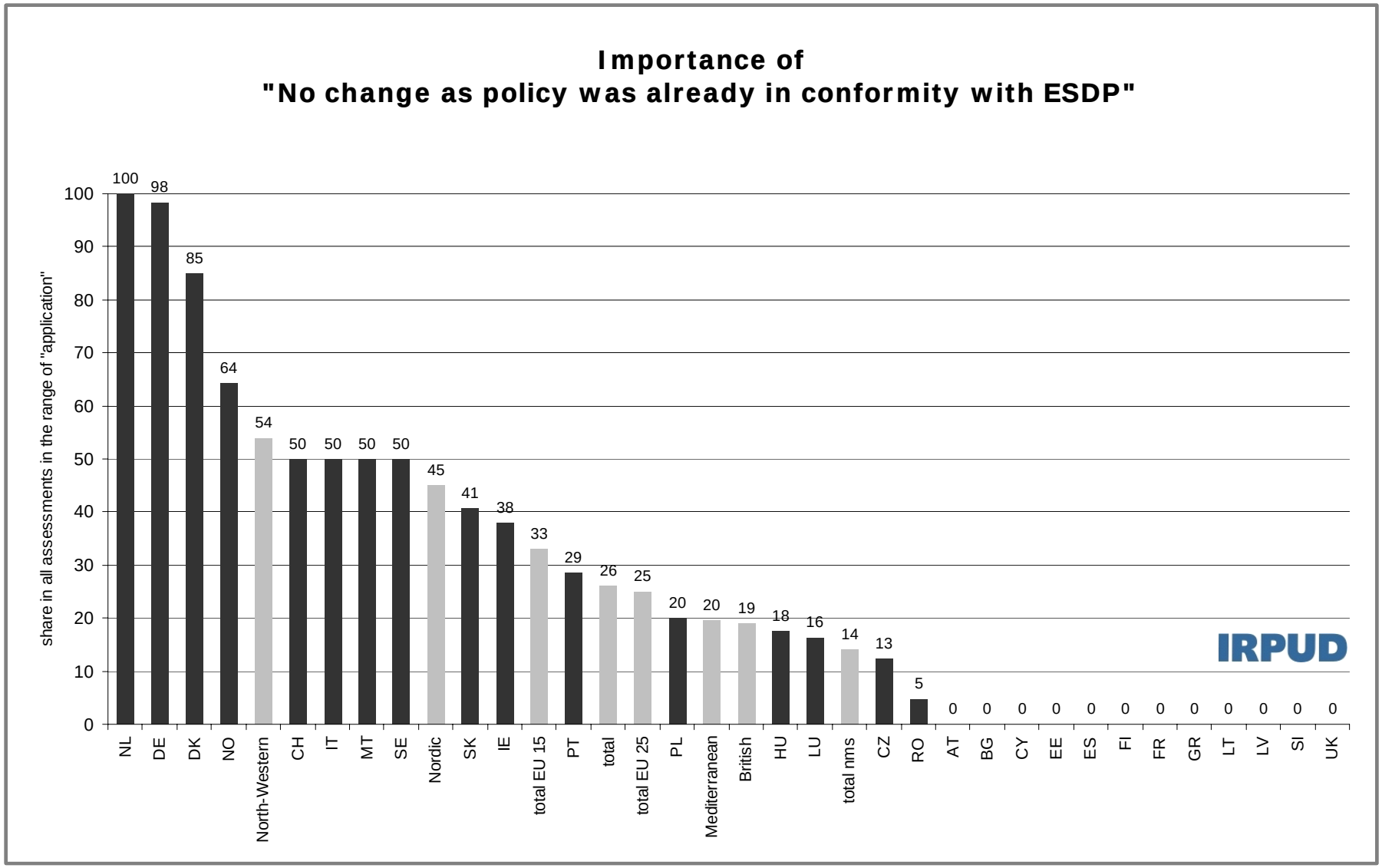
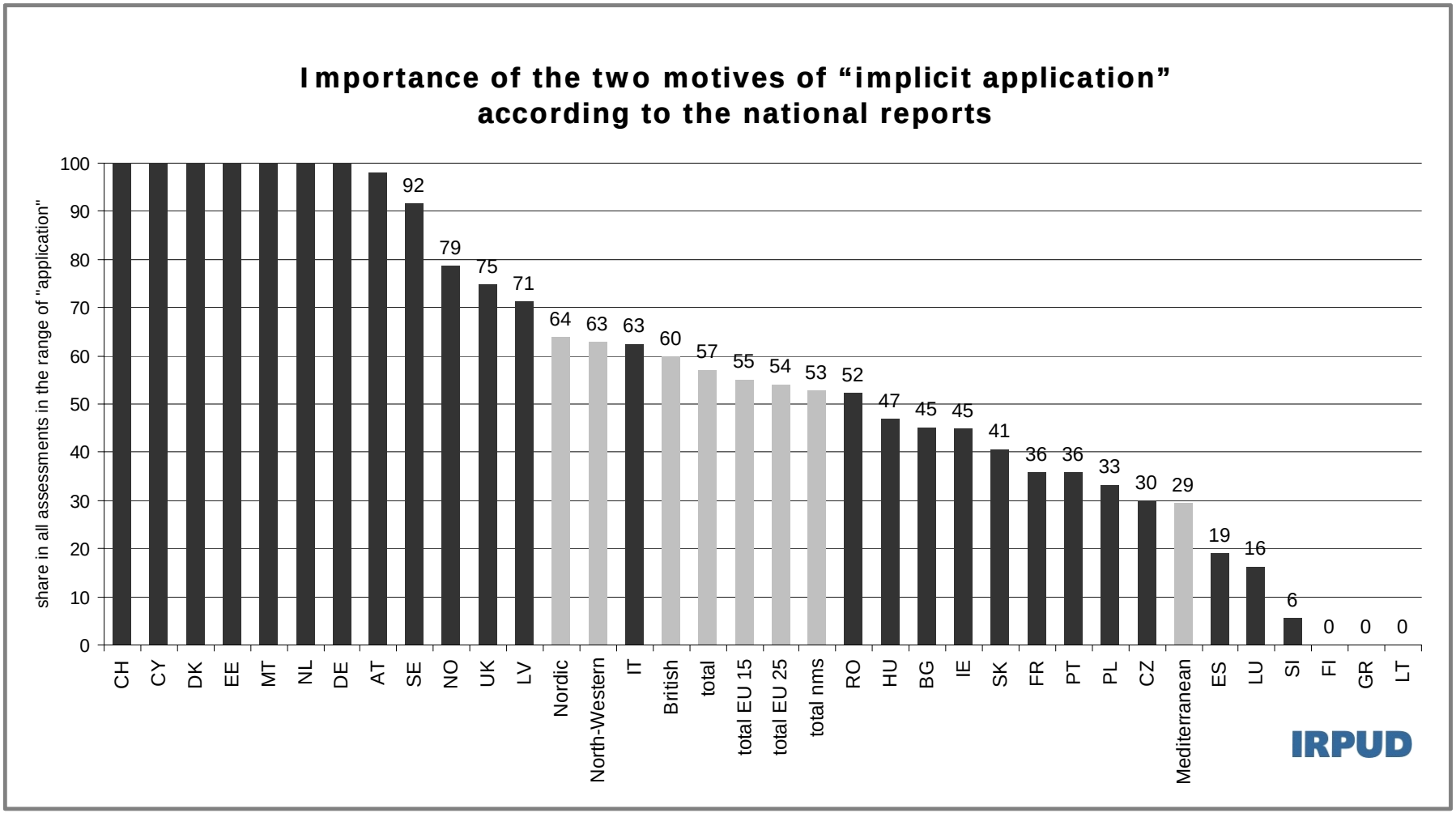


Figure 29 'Implicit application' of ESDP options (national reports)

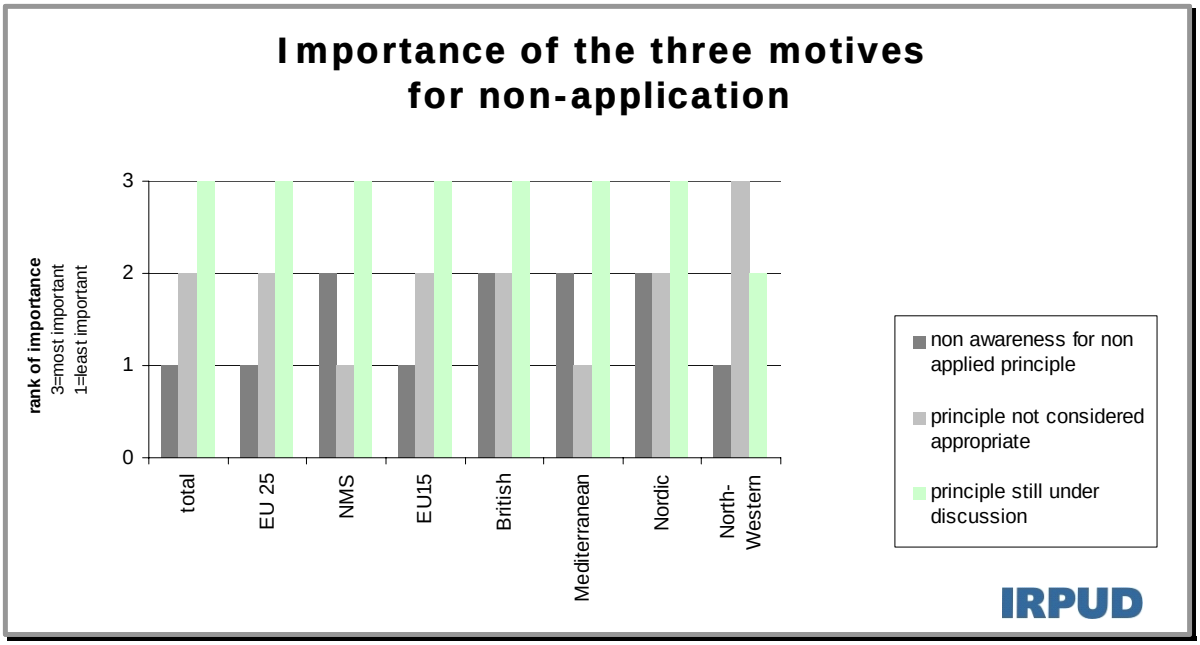


6.4 Country-by-country analysis, by motive of non-application

After analysing the forms of application of ESDP policy options in the ESPON countries, the question remains, which 'motives' lie behind non-application?[xxviii]

What is obvious for all groups from the important rank of the last motive is that ESDP issues remain under discussion (cf Figure 30 and Table 20). This motive of non-application is strong in all groups apart from the North-Western one (due to a negative vote from Luxemburg). This constitutes two thirds of all assessments of non-application. It is possible that after ending "discussion", the respective policy option will be applied in the country. As an effect, it could increase the degree of application in the respective country. Bearing in mind that this is the strongest motive in terms of non-application, it underlines the fact that there is strong support for ESDP policy options in Europe.

Figure 30 Importance of the three motives for not-applying ESDP options



The second most important motive for the non-application of ESDP policy options is: "No change and/or conformity as the issue/policy is not considered appropriate", which was selected by 22% of all assessments stating non-application. Only the "new Member States" rank the "No change and/or conformity due to a lack of awareness of the ESDP" as being more important than considering it not appropriate.

Table 20 Motives for not applying ESDP policy options (national reports)

Country/Region	share of applied options in all options assessed	Sum of four columns = 100%		
		No change and/or conformance as issue/policy is still under discussion	No change and/or conformance as the issue/policy is not considered appropriate	No change and/or conformance due to a lack of awareness of the ESDP
Total average	13	66	22	12
EU 25 average	10	56	26	18
new member states	13	62	17	21
EU 15 average	7	52	33	15
*"Nordic" average**	*5*	*100*	*0*	*0*
*"Mediterranean" av.**	*11*	*83*	*0*	*17*
*British average**	*6*	*100*	*0*	*0*
*"North-Western" av.**	*5*	*33*	*67*	*0*
Notes	*All perspectives have to be taken with caution as they base on very few assessments: Nordic (n=2), British (n=2), Mediterranean perspective (n=6), North-Western perspective (n=12).			

6.5 Analysis of Policy Aims and Options

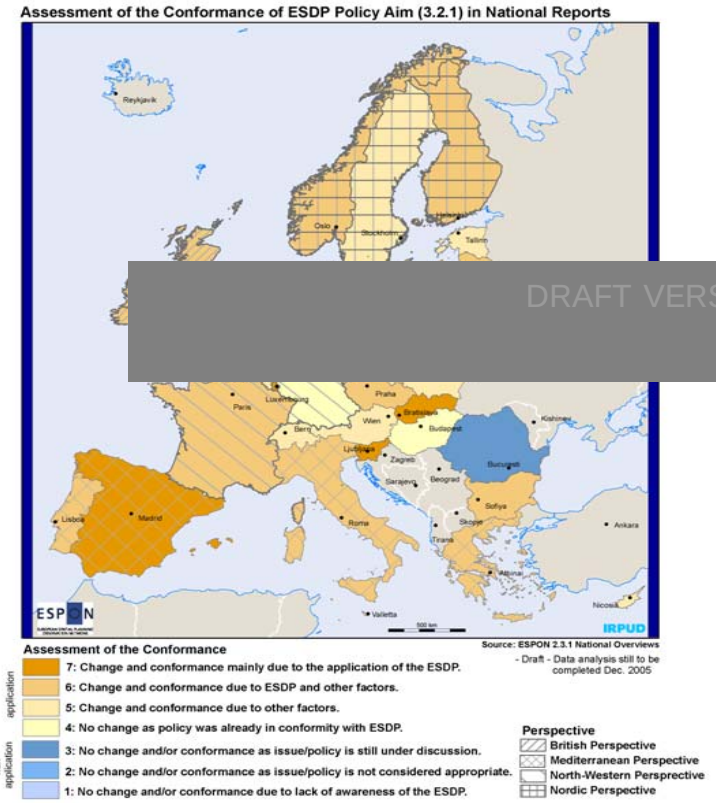
IRPUD took a more detailed look at the assessment of the 62 policy options presented in the national reports. Unfortunately, gaps in answer patterns are so wide that only an analysis of the thirteen policy aims can be provided. In addition, this analysis can only be done in a partial fashion at present.

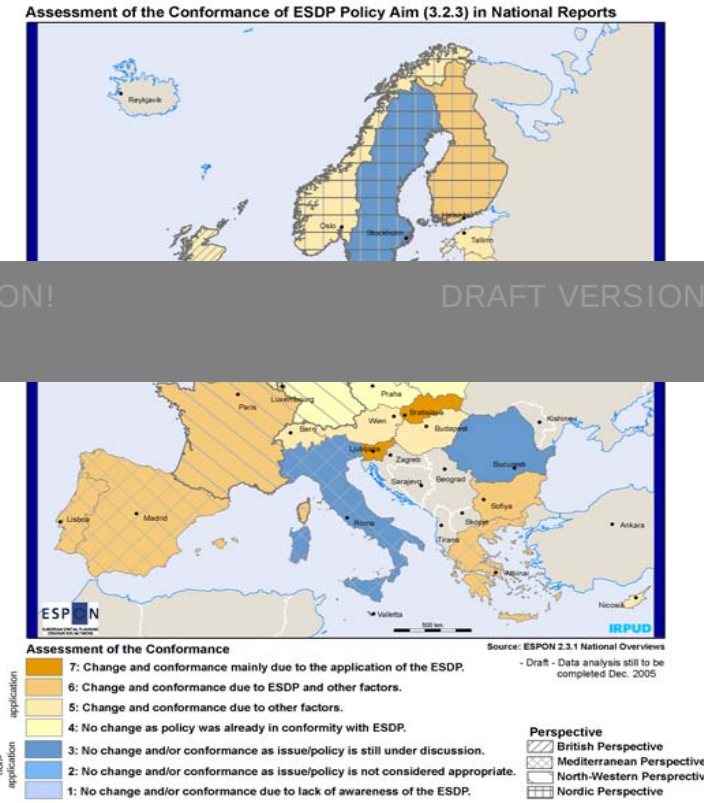
Bearing this in mind, an initial set of maps has been developed, identifying the differences in 'application' or 'non-application' of ESDP policy aims in 29 countries. This provides an indication of 'coherence' with the policy aims set out by the ESDP, and thus ***must not be mistaken*** as being a comment on the general application or non-application of the ESDP as such.

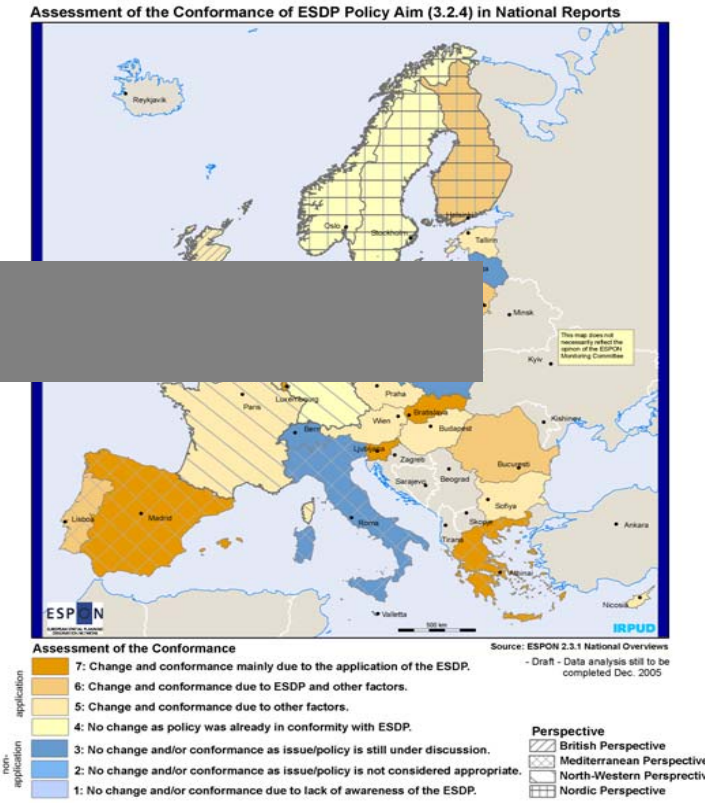
Rather, the following maps (see Map 4) provide a first step towards the graphic representation of typologies of regions or variations in application. Note should also be made of the variations both in single countries, but also in groups of countries (the regional perspectives).

Map 4 Conformity with ESDP Policy Aims

(NB: Data for Belgium is not valid!)







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[i] In this report, to the 60 original policy options we have added two more policy aims without subordinated policy options (3.3.1 and 3.4.1) and thus we speak of 62 policy options.

[ii] Again, the information is based on 91 Web Questionnaires, which have been completed by the same number of experts, from 23 countries. The information can only be used as a complete set. The differentiation according to countries is not possible due to the small size of the sample.

[iii] Experts were labelled according to their self -assessment. L0 – subsumes experts at the 'national' level (24), L1 – subsumes experts at the 'regional' level (17), L2 – subsumes experts at the 'local' level (11). Scores have been enhanced to proliferate the differences. Dimension: %-share of all answers, which agree that a regional differentiation of impact is observable.

[iv] Percentage share of all answers (weighted). % of all answers per NUTS/LAU level:

NUTS0 - 16 NUTS1 - 13 NUTS2 - 19 NUTS3 - 20 LAU1 - 14 LAU2 - 17

[v] The number of assessable answers per main question varied from 6 to 91 answers.

[vi] Attention: The coding of scores in this table is different from the one used in **Error! Reference source not found.**!

[vii] The calculation is based on the simple addition of categories and their division by number of nominations. Therefore, the two arrows, indicating the application or non-application range, have supplanted the metric scale.

[viii] This interpretation is based on rather few values per group of countries (cf. Figure 9). The British perspective for example is based on only two Web Questionnaires.

[ix] For Belgium, the two experts involved provide answers in respect of the application of the ESDP's aims and options that differ too much among the three Regions (Walloon region, Flemish region, Brussels) to allow us to make a meaningful synthetic assessment at the national level. **In consequence, all of our average values stating "EU 25" actually only concern 24 countries.** In order not to confuse readers, we stick to the term of "EU 25".

[x] Titles as indicated on the cover of each individual case study, namely: PlaNet CenSE (Austria): Cross Border Cooperation Graz/Maribor (Austria): Structure Plan of Flanders (Belgium): Urban Planning System (Cyprus): Cross border management of the river landscapes (Czech Republic); Committee of Experts in Spatial Development (Germany): Triangle Area (Denmark): Oresund Region (Denmark): Via Baltica (Estonia): Navarrian Spatial Vision (Spain): Schemas regionaux d'amenagement du territoire SRAT (France): The Egnatia Odos Observatory (Greece): ESDP in the field of natural and cultural heritage (Hungary): Midland Region (Ireland): The North West Macroregion (Italy): Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project (Lithuania): SaarLorLux and Spatial Development Perspective (provided by Luxemburg but covering Germany, France and Luxemburg): Riga Planning Region Spatial Plan (Latvia): Structure Plan Review (Malta): National Spatial Strategy of The Netherlands (Netherlands): Changing patterns of spatial accessibility in Poland with special reference to the accessibility to centres of higher education (Poland): Regional Spatial Plan Algarve Region PROTAL (Portugal): Stockholm and the region "Lake Mälaren" (Sweden): Slovak Spatial Development Strategy 2001 (Slovakia): North-West England (United Kingdom).

[xi] In this report, we added the 60 policy options and the two new policy aims without subordinated policy options (3.3.1 and 3.4.1) together, and thus talk of 62 policy options.

[xii] Terminology

Policy guideline: e.g. 3.2 “Polycentric Spatial Development and a new urban-rural relationship”

Policy aim: e.g. 3.2.1 “Polycentric and balanced spatial development”

Policy option: one of the 60 options, e.g. 1. “Strengthening of several larger zones of global economic integration in the EU, equipped with high-quality, global functions and services, including the peripheral areas, through transnational spatial development strategies.”

[xiii] Authors were asked to check one box out of seven in every row. The seven boxes described the degree of option application and non-application respectively.

11 (39%) out of 28 national reports and 16 (64%) out of 25 case studies provide assessments on policy option level. However, only 2 case studies (Austria, Germany) and 4 national reports (Switzerland, Germany, Luxembourg, Romania) handed in complete tables. Other data sheets provided assessments of multiple, but not all options, usually comprising the first row (marked grey) and some more.

[xiv] 12 (43%) out of 28 national reports and 9 (36%) out of 25 case studies assessed only the first option out of the respective policy aim (the row marked grey), while the rest of the options of the respective aim remain un-assessed. Here, we assume that the respective author thought this assessment to be an assessment of the entire policy aim. In addition, the Luxembourg national report provides assessments for every single option and each of the 13 policy aims.

To the right of this text column the table provided an additional column that was identical to the first, but had been selected independently from the latter by some authors. It was generally selected by those authors who had only selected boxes marked grey in the main table, while leaving the rest empty. We assume that checking the outer box implied “consent” for the respective policy option, with the motive of application marked in the main table.

[xv] The first options in respect of every policy aim (fields marked grey in the table) were the options most frequently assessed (see figure 3). This applies to the national reports as well as to the case studies. The first option of each section provided data for more than 90% of all cases (apart from 3.2.4, 3.4.1, 3.4.3, 3.4.5, where more gaps occurred). There are however only four options in the whole dataset that have been assessed by all authors. They are all from the national reports data set, namely 3.3.2 “polycentric development model: a basis for better accessibility”, 3.3.3 “efficient and sustainable use of the infrastructure”, 3.4.2 “preservation and development of the natural heritage” and 3.4.4. “creative management of cultural landscapes”.

[xvi] There are many ways for explaining the data gaps. They range from a probably unclear layout of the policy option table, the lack of information on the side of authors, the lack of precision of national policies, or the likeliness that the instructions were unclear as to how and what to fill in as regards the policy option table. One project partner stated that from his point of view he was asked to fill in only examples of application and leave out examples of non-application. At this point then, we are unable to differentiate between the prevailing reasons. As such we regard non existing data as merely non-existent, i.e. we interpret empty cells as standing for 'not relevant'. A negative value can be excluded. Should we subsequently disover the cause in terms of the empty cells, our approach to this question could alter.

[xvii] This applies to Denmark, Estonia, Spain, Finland, France, Greece, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, and Slovakia

[xviii] “Incomplete” here means that the number of assessments available was below 50% (31) and was *not* made for policy aims but for dispersed single policy options. If the number of assessments was below 50% (31), but for at least 75% (10) out of the 13 policy aims, the data is NOT considered “incomplete”.

[xix] The ESPON regional perspectives differentiate as follows: Nordic Perspective (Denmark, Sweden, Finland), North-Western Perspective (France, Belgium, Luxemburg, The

Netherlands, Germany), Mediterranean Perspective (Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal), and the British Perspective (United Kingdom, Ireland). For this report, Belgium was excluded from the respective family and perspectives, as it did not provide clear assessments in its national report.

[xx] Average degrees of application in Figure 18 and Figure 19 were calculated as follows: The county-by-country share of options applied in all options assessed was added. The result was divided by the number of national reports (for the national reports) and of the number of case studies. (for the case studies).

[xxi] For this question, we considered only those case studies that clearly refer to a single country. This applies to 20 of the 25 case studies. In contrast, the case studies Cross Border Cooperation Graz-Maribor (Austria/Slovakia), Oresund Region (Denmark/Sweden), Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project (Latvia/Lithuania), Via Baltica (Estonia, Finland, Latvia), SaarLorLux (Belgium, Netherlands, Luxemburg) were not considered, as they involve more than one country. In addition, the Structure Plan of Flanders (Belgium) was not considered as more than one national report was available.

[xxii] The deviation was calculated by mere subtraction of the degree of application in the national report from the degree of application in the case study, i.e. the result could be negative (if application was stronger in the case study) or negative (if application was stronger in the national report).

[xxiii] This overview was generated on the basis on all assessments, i.e. options un-assessed by the national experts were ignored. Consequently, the missing share up to 100% judged “non-application” of the ESDP.

Denmark, Spain, Hungary and Ireland provided less that 50% of all assessments possible and do not give clear assessments for at least 75% of the policy aims. The data sets are thus termed, “incomplete.”

[xxiv] For the typology of explicit and implicit application of ESDP policy options, see also ESPON 2.3.1 FIR, pp. 191-192.

[xxv] This is due to a change in the order of the countries, as the Mediterranean perspective exclusively contains countries from the ‘Napoleonic family’, but leaves out countries not supporting this motive.

[xxvi] As Luxemburg changes from the Napoleonic family to the North-Western perspective, the motive “Change and conformity mainly due to the application of the ESDP” is relevant for 6% of the North-Western perspective application options.

[xxvii] Denmark also states that it already saw a high level of conformity before the ESPD has been released. This statement must however be treated with some caution as the Danish sample is incomplete.

[xxviii] This is much more difficult to analyse as the number of samples is very low. Apart from the fact that the data set is partly incomplete, most countries stated an overwhelming degree of application of ESDP policy options. This means, that per country usually only 5-10 assessments fall into the range of “non-application”.