

# ESPO TANGO – Territorial Approaches for New Governance

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## Territorial governance matters

During the ESPON Open Seminar in Dublin on 13-14 June 2013 the ESPON community was continually reminded that the prevailing territorial trends and the need for resilience in light of the financial crisis make the role of territorial governance more central than ever.

Europe is still in recovery from a deep financial crisis and struggling with unemployment and social exclusion. It must switch to a low-carbon economy and adapt to the climate changes that are already underway. Responding to these daunting tasks requires effective and urgent policy initiatives and actions at European, national, regional and local levels as well as across different policy sectors. The 'place-based approach' as delineated in the Barca Report and the existence of good governance with a strong adaptive capacity is recognised as a critical factor in addressing the agenda set by the EU 2020 Strategy. This is further reflected in the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 and the NTCCP (Network of Territorial Cohesion Contact Points) report from 2013, which both call for a place-based, territorially sensitive and integrated approach to policies, so as to improve the performance of actions on all levels and create synergies between different types of policy interventions.

The TANGO (Territorial Approaches to New Governance) project asserts that territorial governance matters in order to achieve specific territorial development goals and, in doing so, to strive towards the EU's objective of territorial cohesion. But *how* and *under which circumstances* territorial governance matters varies considerably for the vast range of territories across Europe. Thus distinguishing generalisable and transferable lessons about territorial governance processes is a challenging task, but one that can provide additional fuel to the EU Cohesion Policy debate and input into national, regional and local spatial planning processes.

The main objective of the TANGO project is to draw and synthesize conclusions about territorial governance throughout Europe. Based on a theory-driven, pragmatic and consensual definition and operationalization of territorial governance, the focus of the project is to understand the **processes by which actors and institutions at different levels formulate and implement policies, programmes and projects to achieve a certain territorial goal that is aligned to the Europe 2020 strategy**. We provide conclusions about how broader policy processes such as coordination of actors and institutions, cross-sectoral integration, stakeholder mobilisation, adaptive capacity, and realising territorial specificities and impacts, have contributed to 'good' territorial governance. In the end we stress that comparability and transferability of territorial governance in Europe is not aimed at searching for 'one-size-fits-all' solutions, but rather at building an evidence-based set of opportunities for innovation in territorial governance practices at different levels/in different contexts. These practical examples are seen specifically in the **Handbook "Towards better Territorial Governance: A guide for practitioners, policy and decision makers"**.

## Conceptualising and Operationalising Territorial Governance

The evidence-base of the above-mentioned questions is derived from a typology survey of national trends in territorial governance, an analysis of the relevance and practicality of indicators of territorial governance and most saliently, from a dozen case studies across Europe of territorial governance at play (see Map 1). Most existing theoretical and empirical territorial governance studies examine the role that governance plays in achieving a certain outcome and confirming that yes, governance does matter. Still there remains a need to revisit the feedback loop from the theoretical starting point about *how* it matters. This sort of reflection has in particular helped to meet the specific objectives of this project, namely to generalise current trends, to identify those governance practices which can be considered as being 'innovative' or 'good' and, finally, to discuss the extent of their transferability into other contexts.

The review and comparison of typologies of government and governance and the survey of national governance trends helps to address two key issues. First, it helps to understand the extent to which trends in territorial governance are common (or dissimilar) across the European Union's member states (or clusters of member states). Second, the typology research helps to identify the relative importance attached to the five dimensions of territorial governance (see below) in different member states of the EU (and clusters of member states), which in turn helps to understand the extent to which conceptions of territorial governance are similar or different across Europe.

The analysis suggests that trends in territorial governance and the level of importance attached to different dimensions of territorial governance are neither strongly related to the quality of governance of nation states nor to the clusters of countries identified using quality of governance indicators (or existing typologies of government and governance). In other words, differential approaches and ideas associated with territorial governance cannot easily be linked to typologies of government and governance. **Nonetheless, the results of the typology exercise seem to give some strength to the argument that that “territorial governance” is indeed a different animal than trends in “regular” governance or government.**

The TANGO working definition of territorial governance serves as the central theoretical framework from which to study territorial governance processes at play. The point of departure has been to bring together of various key points from the literature with regard to what is perceived as (most) essential and inherent to the concept of territorial governance. We took inspiration from not only literature on territorial governance (eg. Davoudi et al 2008, Gualini 2008, Faludi 2012), but also debates around the concepts of stakeholder participation (eg Healey 1997) as well as resilience and adaptability (eg. Gupta et al 2010). Finally, to address the lack of further specification of the notion of geographic specificity or territory which is often absent in the literature (Jordan 2008), and the policy debate which shows that place

and territory matter, our research approach includes the extent to which place-based/territorial specificities and components are addressed within territorial governance practices.

Based on the literature review and extensive discussion and negotiation with the experts on the project team, the TANGO working definition of territorial governance emerges as:

Territorial governance is the formulation and implementation of public policies, programmes and projects for the development\* of a place/territory by

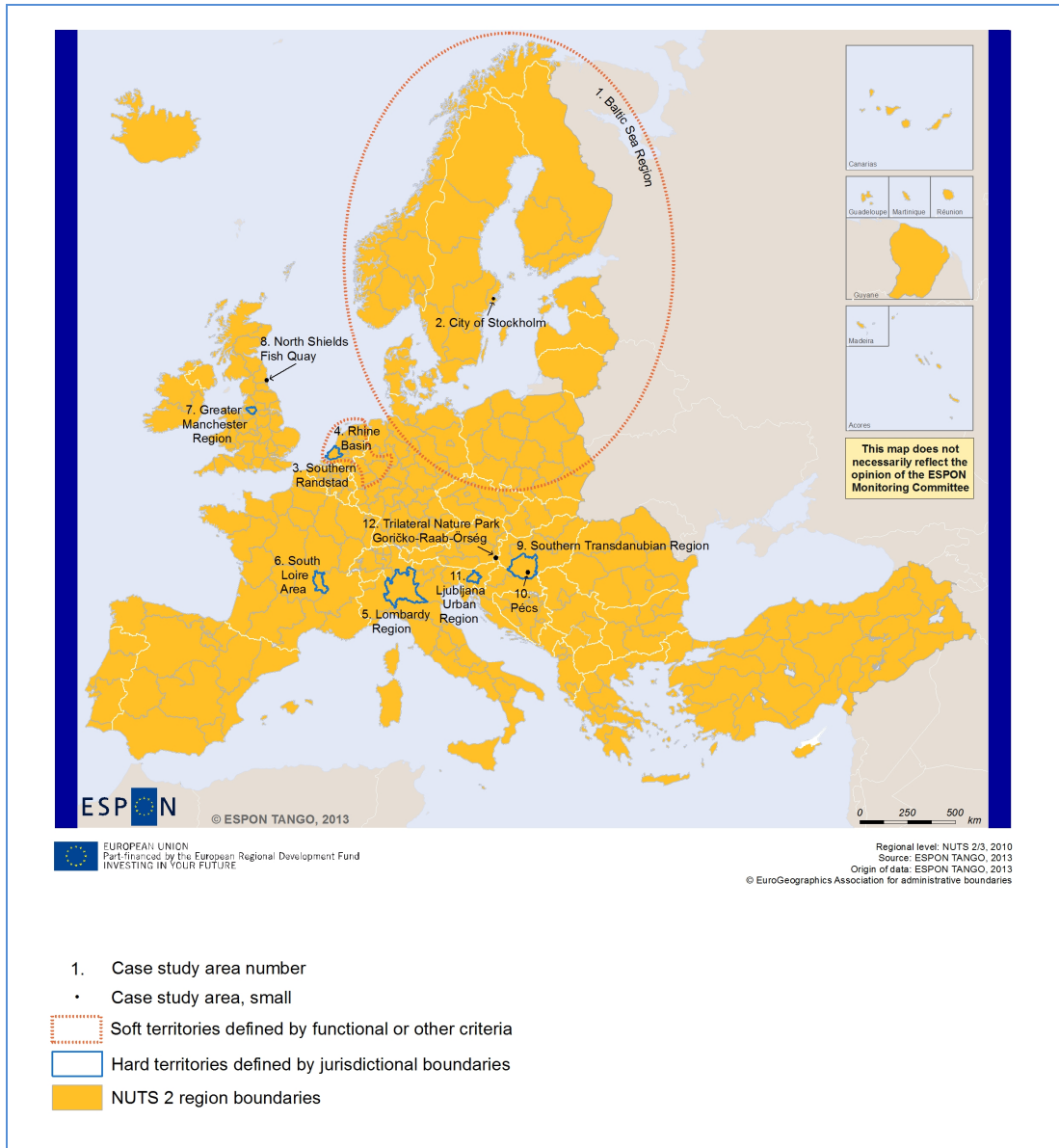
- 1) co-ordinating actions of actors and institutions,
- 2) integrating policy sectors,
- 3) mobilising stakeholder participation,
- 4) being adaptive to changing contexts,
- 5) realising place-based/territorial specificities and impacts.

We consider 1) to 5) as “dimensions” of territorial governance which provide added value to achieving territorial cohesion.

\* We define development as the improvement in the efficiency, equality and environmental quality of a place/territory (in line with the Europe 2020 strategy).

*Figure 1: TANGO definition and dimensions of Territorial Governance*

A Delphi exercise performed in the autumn of 2012 largely confirmed the further elaboration of our dimensions into 12 subsequent qualitative “indicators” of territorial governance. These were then used to generate questions in an extensive Case Study Guideline and Interview Guide which partners used in performing their case studies. All case studies were based on in-depth interviews with 8-12 relevant stakeholders, as well as policy documents. To ensure topicality, the objects of the 12 case studies are all from around 2000 until the present. The cases are representative of the major geographic areas of Europe and address a number of territorial policy areas as well as a range of institutional levels. But most of them address at least some form of ‘bottom-up’ governance process. They also involve territories bounded by ‘hard’ administrative borders as well as those with ‘softer’ functional delimitations.



Map 1: TANGO case study areas main territorial focus

## Synthesising findings on territorial governance

The twelve case studies in the TANGO project have been designed based on the dimensions and indicators to provide an understanding how actors and institutions at different levels formulate and implement policies, programmes and projects to achieve a certain territorial goal, and assess their performance.

*Table 1: Overview of the 12 TANGO case studies*

1	Climate change adaptation strategy for the Baltic Sea Region
2	Resource efficient urban development in Stockholm
3	Public transport and urban development in Rotterdam-The Hague
4	Cross-border Cooperation in the River Rhine Basin
5	Target-based Tripartite Agreement in Lombardy
6	The South Loire plan for territorial cohesion
7	Greater Manchester Combined Authority
8	Neighbourhood Planning in North Shields Fish Quay
9	Building Structural Fund Management systems in Central and Eastern Europe
10	The European Capital of Cultural Pécs
11	Public transport strategies in the Ljubljana Urban Region
12	Trilateral Nature Park Goričko-Raab-Órség

Based on our analysis a number of ‘features’ of territorial governance were extracted from each case study to consider to what extent they are either promoters or inhibitors to achieving a certain territorial development goal (as defined in the policy, programme or project at hand). Whereas the **‘features’ have a more ‘normative’ function** indicating some lessons for designing territorial governance (see the handbook: Towards better Territorial Governance: A guide for practitioners, policy and decision-makers), the **‘components of territorial governance’** that have been also distilled from the case studies **are more of objective character**, since they are analytically derived from our theoretical and conceptual framework.



**Dimension 1: Coordinating actions of actors and institutions**

- 1) Distributing power across levels
- 2) Distinguishing modes of leadership
- 3) Structures of coordination
- 4) Dealing with constraints to coordination

**Dimension 2: Integrating policy sectors**

- 5) Structural context for sectoral integration
- 6) Achieving synergies across sectors
- 7) Acknowledging sectoral conflicts
- 8) Dealing with sectoral conflicts

**Dimension 3: Mobilising Stakeholder participation**

- 9) Identification of stakeholders
- 10) Securing of democratic legitimacy and accountability
- 11) Integration of interests/viewpoints
- 12) Insights into territorial governance processes

**Dimension 4: Being adaptive to changing contexts**

- 13) Institutional learning.
- 14) Individual learning and reflection
- 15) Evidence of forward-looking actions
- 16) Scope of flexibility/experimentation

**Dimension 5: Realising place-based/territorial specificities and impacts**

- 17) Criteria/logic of defining intervention area
- 18) Coping with hard and soft/functional spaces
- 19) Utilisation of territorial (expert) knowledge
- 20) Integration of territorial analysis

*Figure 2: The 20 components of territorial governance as a framework for synthesising the 12 case studies*

In general we can argue that the interplay within the triangle composed of Dimensions 1, 2 and 3 has been (largely) captured, although using different starting points, by the concept of multi-level governance. These dimensions have **coordination as the overarching mechanism**. Nonetheless, we argue that the territorial elements and the shift from 'multi-level governance' to what we define as 'territorial governance' become most explicit when incorporating dimension 4 and 5. The focus on the knowledge-related components within the case studies helps us recognise (relational) space as a social construct, and factor in 'place' and 'territory' factor into multi-level governance practices. These dimensions have **knowledge as the overarching mechanism**.

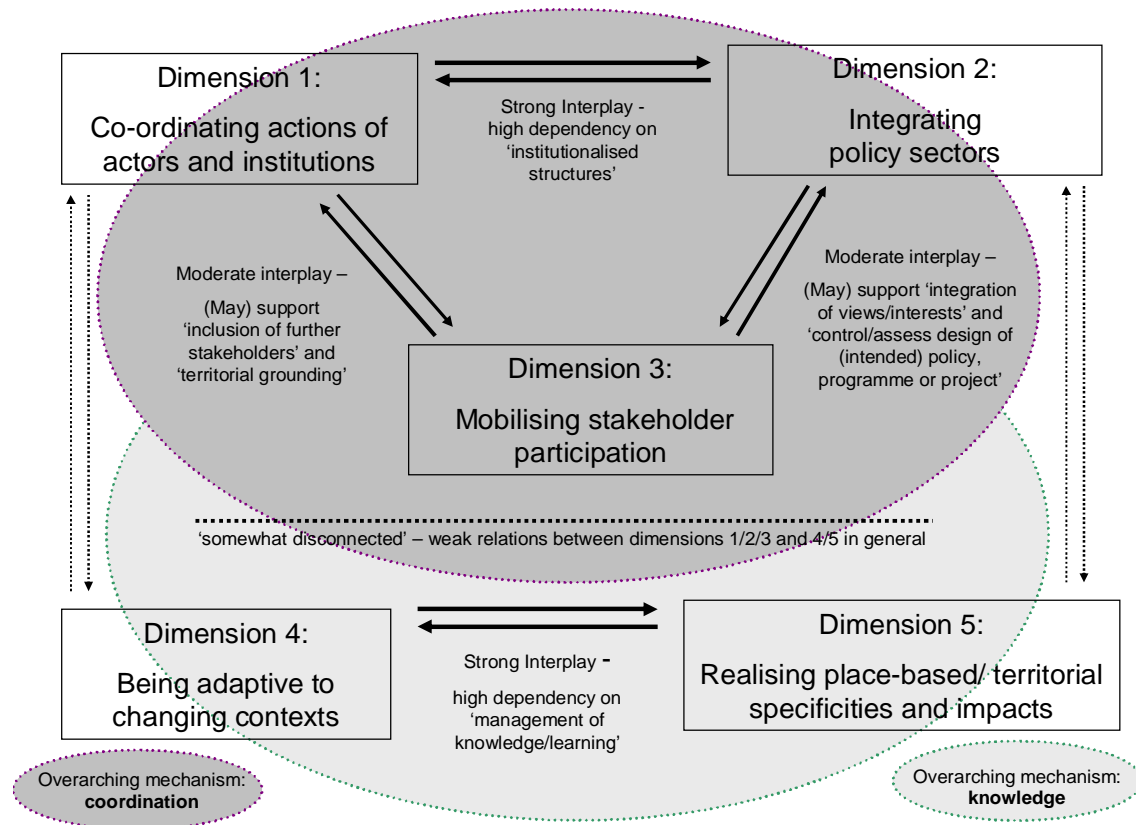


Figure 3: Inter-relationships between the five dimensions of territorial governance

We assert that this is one of the added value elements of the TANGO research: **based of our empirical evidence we argue that territorial governance includes not only dimension 1, 2 and 3, but also dimensions 4 and 5, which truly distinguish it from multi-level governance and includes in a pronounced way the territorial and knowledge-based perspective.**

## The Added Value of a Territorial Governance Approach

The practices of implementation, techniques and methods for policy-making tools, the rules for structuring territorial governance, as well as ideas and principles have been taken into account in the Handbook **'Towards Better Territorial Governance in Europe: A Guide for practitioners, policy and decision makers.** The guide addresses the main phases of the territorial governance process, i.e. *decision*, *address*, *implementation* and *assessment*, which are respectively managed by the target groups of the guide: decision makers, policy makers, practitioners and the technical/scientific community.

Both the Handbook and the main report are resulting from our case studies and synthesis of outcomes. We argue that policymakers, decision makers and practitioners or spatial planning and related policy areas can find **added value in taking a territorial governance approach** for the following reasons and in the following ways:

- A territorial governance approach that *coordinates the actions of actors and institutions* pays attention to the distribution of power across levels and makes a distinction between **regulative power** (ability to make laws and regulations) and **normative power** (ability to frame visions and strategies). The latter is more likely to be used in “softer” functional spaces than in harder administrative “governmental” spaces (cf. dimension 5). This coordination (cf. dimension 1) is also **facilitated by clear and consensual leadership – either formal or informal**. Coordinating actors and institutions can help to ensure that policies or strategies are efficient and equitable to achieve “smarter” growth and a more cost-effective manner.
- A territorial governance approach that works on *integrating policy sectors* should first **acknowledge that sectoral conflict exists** and needs to be dealt with. This requires **territorial knowledge of different sectors** as well as knowledge of various stakeholder **values and principles** (cf. dimension 2). The TANGO case studies show that the means to facilitate inter-sectoral synergies is mainly through **dialogue, partnerships and networks**; basically the people involved in the various sectors need enter into frank discussions with one another about how a territorial goal can be solved in an inter-sectoral manner. But in order to do this, national, regional and local administrative structures also need to be **adaptable enough** to enable inter-sectoral work (cf. dimension 4). This could facilitate an approach which is more “sustainable” in considering all of the relevant sectors within the areas of economy, social aspects and environmental policy.
- A territorial governance approach that can efficiently and equitably *mobilise stakeholder participation* can do so by ensuring the allocation of both **human and financial resources** to make it in the interests of stakeholders to participate (cf. dimension 3). In particular within spatial planning, a number of tools have been developed in recent years (and could be further utilised here) to ensure that **not just the “usual suspects”** join in participatory processes (e.g. using (social) media for engaging a broader range of people as well as other actors and institutions), and that processes be made **accountable to stakeholders** (ie reporting back on how their input was used). In addition, efforts should be made to increase the participation of business interests in stakeholder forums, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises. Such an approach will help to increase “inclusiveness” of the actors which have a stake in an issue

- A territorial governance approach that is *adaptive to changing contexts* can enable national, regional and local authorities to respond to crises, such as the current economic one, by “**thinking outside the box**” in the search for quick (and long-term) solutions. The results of the case studies show that more flexible or “softer” governance structures may have greater scope for flexibility and some of these lessons could be transferred to more bounded administrative structures; i.e. the **opportunities of building more forward-looking developments** into projects. Here again, in particular spatial planning tools like **developing ‘visions’ and/or ‘scenarios’** could support such territorial governance processes in order to identify options and alternatives that are still in line with the intended territorial development goal. However remaining territorial governance challenges to be overcome include finding methods **to transform individual learning and reflection into institutional learning** and the search for ways **to incorporate time for reflection and innovation into existing administrative routines**.
- It is a common place in particular within spatial planning that one of the underlying core challenges is to make trade-offs between the spatial logic of those actors and institutions that align their practices almost solely along the borders of political jurisdictions (hard spaces) and others that favour a more functional approach which demands a more permeable or soft understanding of these ‘hard spaces’. Be it as it may, we argue that **a territorial governance approach that realises place-based/territorial specificities and impacts will inevitably acknowledge that a soft or functional territorial approach can challenge prevailing perceptions and routines of actors and institutions being locked in ‘hard’ spaces**. Acknowledging the co-existence of hard and soft spaces and their institutional limitations and opportunities is a first step which can then be integrated into policies, programmes or projects. The results of the case studies point out several ways how this can be facilitated, including, creation and work towards a **common territorial goal or developing a specific territorial rationale**, utilising a **high degree of flexibility** in policy design and implementation and developing a **culture of collaboration** to link the policy, planning, civil society and scientific communities to coordinate territorial knowledge.

Finally, we assert that the five dimensions as such constitute a simple framework to comprehend territorial governance. In particular they offer room for local, regional and national actors to assess the extent to which the territorial dimension matters within regular (multi-level) governance. Thus the five dimensions offer a holistic approach to support spatial planning work. As such they can be used as an instrument for practitioners, policy makers and decision makers to *think about, review, check, organise and eventually promote territorial governance processes* within spatial planning work.

While it is impossible to give specific instructions for such a wide range of territorial scopes and issues, the figure below illuminates a ‘**checklist**’ of some of the questions that policymakers, decision makers and practitioners can ask themselves to ensure that their planning takes into consideration various territorial governance

dimensions. These questions have been distilled from the 42 Case Study Guideline questions (see Annex D of the Scientific Report) which the cases found particularly relevant in doing territorial governance, and from the examples of the Handbook “Towards Better Territorial Governance”.

*Table 2: A checklist for thinking about and “promoting” Territorial Governance*

<p><b>1. Coordinate the actions of actors and institutions to set up flexible coordination based on subsidiarity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which actors at all levels are needed to organize and deliver the territorial goal at stake?</li> <li>• What types of existing platforms or forums are available to facilitate coordination?</li> <li>• Do existing platforms/forums have the capacity and legitimacy among actors and institutions to achieve the territorial goal at stake?</li> <li>• What is the formal and informal distribution of power / room for manoeuvre?</li> <li>• What types of territorial knowledge do actors and institutions have?</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Integrate policy sectors to create a rationale for policy integration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which policy sectors are needed to be able solve the issue at hand?</li> <li>• What are the potential or real sectoral conflicts?</li> <li>• Who is able to discuss the topic? Who has a stake in this?</li> <li>• What are the potential synergies that could be realized by inter-sectoral cooperation?</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Mobilise stakeholder participation to involve the appropriate actors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have all relevant groups been considered (e.g. inhabitants, policymakers, interest groups)?</li> <li>• How can new or previously excluded groups be included in participation processes?</li> <li>• How could stakeholders be encouraged to participate?</li> <li>• How are stakeholders given insight into territorial governance processes?</li> <li>• Are there processes or mechanisms in place to use the territorial knowledge gained through stakeholder participation?</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Be adaptable to changing contexts to pursue a shared understanding of the changing context</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can individual and institutional learning be encouraged?</li> <li>• How can forward-looking and/or experimental decisions be made?</li> <li>• In which ways can new territorial knowledge be integrated into the process?</li> <li>• Have contingency plans been made, and what is the scope of flexibility?</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Realise place-based/territorial specificities and impacts to adopt a multi-scalar vision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the place-based specificities that are most relevant for the issue?</li> <li>• How has the area of intervention been defined? Are the boundaries “soft” or hard?</li> <li>• How can territorial knowledge (expert or tacit) be utilized in achieving the goal?</li> <li>• How are the territorial impacts of policies, programmes and projects evaluated?</li> </ul>

Returning to one of the main questions posed in the first chapter “Why is territorial governance important?” we illuminate some policy options which may be important for the future of EU Cohesion Policy. In short, we assert that by focusing on territorial governance, Cohesion Policy decision and policy-makers and practitioners can more fruitfully engage in territorial development in a more place-based manner. As such, we would assert that **territorial governance as a means to achieve a territorial cohesion needs to be more prominently framed within EU policy documents such as the update of the Territorial Agenda EU 2020.**

To this end, the results of the TANGO analyses of the case studies can point out several options for how Cohesion Policy strategies and instruments could facilitate ‘better’ territorial governance. Many of these options are not novel or innovative, but as the case studies and the Handbook “Towards Better Territorial Governance” show, they would address important gaps still remaining in territorial governance processes.

### **Coordinating the actions of actors and institutions**

In order for Cohesion Policy to better be able to *coordinate the actions of actors and institutions*, it is important to remember that coordination is largely an iterative process. Existing networks and partnerships that have been built up both around Operational Programmes or other regional development cooperation should be harnessed with regard to forming potential new projects, particularly flagship or strategic projects. It is especially important that the networks formed in a bottom-up fashion are utilised in programme and project development, as these tend to have a higher rate of success (ESPON TERCO). Likewise discussions of future Cohesion Policy instruments could further stress the need for programmes to take a **multi-level governance approach** and involve actors on all appropriate levels in projects so as to increase their political legitimacy.

Against this backdrop, new instruments for intervention in cities and territories in the EU Cohesion Policy period 2014-20 are addressed to improve interaction among actors and organisations. In particular, the **Community Led Local Development (CLLD)** is built on the long experience of the LEADER Community Initiative.

### **Integrating policy sectors**

In order for Cohesion Policy to facilitate *integrating policy sectors* administrative routines and structures should be promoted to create synergies (and avoid overlap). Horizontal Actions within Operational Programmes are good examples of this (here the cross-cutting **Horizontal Actions of the EUSBSR Action Programme**). This is especially important in light of the reduction of priority areas that the current programming period insists upon in order to avoid potential problems with absorption of funds. Thus future Cohesion Policy discussions could make horizontal actions a more pronounced aim of Operational Programmes.

In regards to methods and techniques, territorial governance should be assessed from a territorial and inter-sectoral perspective, which implies the adoption of inter-sectoral evaluations. With this in mind, the **Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA)** represents an interesting approach to evaluate territorial policies and projects,

although it was originally intended to evaluate the territorial impacts of EU sector legislation. High-level institutions and organisations, such as DG REGIO and DG AGRI, ESPON and Eurostat, are currently developing this approach and this could further lend itself to a territorial governance perspective.

### **Mobilising stakeholder participation**

In order for Cohesion Policy to better *mobilise stakeholder participation*, the Partnership Contracts of the 2014-2020 period for the coordination of funds and mobilisation of stakeholders should be evaluated as to how they have established truly collaborative forums. Place-based schemes cannot be managed by central governments alone. Thus local and regional stakeholders and the territorial knowledge they bring with them (cf. dimension 5) are essential to ensure that a bottom-up perspective complements top-down Cohesion Policy actions. Partnership Contracts could then include the demand that stakeholders from all levels are active in the drafting and implementation of programmes.

**Benchmarking exercises** to compare how involvement and participation mechanisms are implemented in different situations may be helpful. These can be learnt, amongst others, from the LEED (Local Economic and Employment Development) Programme of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Activities developed by the Eurocities network and by the EU programme URBACT deserve attention as well. Here, one may look at very diverse initiatives focused on a specific issue (unemployment or wellbeing, for instance) or referred to more comprehensive development strategies. These help to find similarities and possibilities to adopt – and adapt – strategies and methodologies in different contexts.

### **Being adaptable to changing contexts**

In order for Cohesion Policy be more *adaptive to changing contexts*, there is a need to find ways of **transcending the project form** to ensure that the knowledge and outputs of various projects are not lost once the project ends and can be utilised in the longer term. This includes questions of the “**ownership**” of **immaterial results** of projects and the possible “institutionalisation” of strategic documents and visions. Future Operational Programmes could thus encourage projects to develop **long-term strategies for how the knowledge created will be made accessible and sustainable** (for example web platforms).

The Common Strategic Framework for EU Cohesion Policy during the 2014-20 period has introduced some major improvements, such as the Partnership Contract between the EU and Member States and various instruments for local development in specific sub-regional areas. An adaptability and **alignment of national and regional programming systems** with the EU model in the next years would ensure consistent gains in overall efficiency. To this end a greater focus on the different types of institutional capacity (see ESPON SMART-IST) would facilitate such alignment.

### **Realising the place-based/territorial specificities and impacts**

In order for Cohesion Policy to better *realise place-based /territorial specificities and impacts*, programmes must be built on the areas' specific challenges and opportunities. This extends not just to analysing the socio-economic or territorial trends and data of a region, but also **assessment of the territorial governance processes** within a region. To this end, a **better balanced and timely utilisation of on-going or ex post evaluations** could be made to ensure their inclusion in the policy designing and drafting of new programmes. On-going and ex post evaluations of the new programming period could thus include how the **territorial governance situation within a region (or cross-border region) could affect the realisation of programme objectives, priorities and indicators**. This will help in the creation and sharing of territorial knowledge as one of the mechanisms by which the Territorial Agenda EU 2020 proposes to make territorial cohesion a reality. Moreover, the recently introduced tool for the next Cohesion Fund programme period (2014-2020) – the **Integrated Territorial Investments** (ITI) advocates going beyond traditional administrative boundaries to co-operate and co-ordinate actions in order to achieve shared goals. Based on ITI, the **Integrated Sustainable Urban Development** is proposed more specifically for territorial governance in urban areas.

## **Directions for Further Research**

While there is a strong consensus on the need for greater evidence-based policy for territorial development on all levels in Europe, the great territorial diversity of the ESPON-space makes generalisations on how to do this unwieldy.

We argue that the hitherto strong focus within ESPON on quantitative analysis based primarily on available territorial statistics is a first, necessary step to description of the challenges and opportunities in Europe. But **to understand why cities and regions develop in different ways, in-depth knowledge is often necessary, and requires in turn qualitative analysis**. When qualitative methods are applied to support evidence-based policy-making, it is often in the form of case studies of cities and regions. This partly contradicts the overall aim to derive universal conclusions for the entire ESPON space. Nonetheless, **to make the next step in terms of understanding the territorial dynamics and mechanisms in Europe, there should be more room for qualitative research in general and in the broad field of territorial governance in particular**.

In this light we want to underline that the TANGO project has been an initial step in this direction and there are certainly further possibilities for follow-up research in the future, be it within the ESPON 2020 programme or beyond.

### ***Further investigations within dimensions 4 and 5***

Much of the policy analysis today focuses on governance or multi-level governance in the sense of tracing vertical and horizontal linkages (TANGO Dimensions 1 and 2 respectively and partly even Dimension 3) and integration of relevant stakeholders (particularly from the bottom-up) into decision making and policy making processes.



Thus far, little attention has been paid to the 'territorial' dimensions of governance; or adaptability and use of place-based / territorial specificities and impacts (Dimensions 4 and 5 respectively in TANGO terms). These dimensions are projected to become even more important in light of the proliferation of "softer" territorial spaces, in Europe that transcend national administrative boundaries such as macro-regions. In this light, it might be worthwhile to set up a "targeted analysis project" (priority 2), in order to study how the two dimensions factor into territorial development within a specific territorial context (e.g. a city-region) and what are the concrete practices or at least possibilities seen by local stakeholders to overcome some of the addressed challenges.

***Re-visiting the concept of stakeholders: For whom do the TANGO results really matter?***

When it comes to policy relevant implications, it is important to stress that the various case studies constituting the evidence-base of the project address policies, programmes and projects on various governance levels as well as located within different institutional and geographical contexts. Therefore, particular attention must be paid to identifying 'for whom' the identified territorial governance promoters and inhibitors are considered to be 'good' or 'bad'. Whereas the territorial governance promoters derived from the case studies may be referred to the potential target audiences to which they are mainly addressed to, such a distinction is by no means exhaustive and requires further empirical research on the matter.

In particular within (territorial) governance studies, actors and institutions are in the focus. Looking at our case studies, we can, unsurprisingly conclude, that these include a very broad range of various kinds of stakeholders. **In other words, when engaging further into territorial governance research, one needs to further investigate what types of stakeholders matter for what kind of element or issue.** The same might be the case for other kind of research and analysis within the broad field of ESPON and beyond.

***Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning: two sides of the same coin?***

In 2011, the two scholars Nuissl and Heinrichs pose the question: Does the governance discourse have something to offer to spatial planning? Taking inspiration this question, we would suggest that the notion of spatial planning and related terms need to be further reflected in a European perspective by distilling a number of key elements in a national as well as transnational perspective. In recent years some basic work has been undertaken in the field of comparing planning systems and conceptualising the notion of planning cultures across Europe. The results stemming from this exercise should be systematically compared with findings and conclusions from the TANGO project. In the end, it would be fruitful for the debate within ESPON as well as the larger planning and policy community in **Europe to what extent the two notions (territorial governance and spatial planning) can cross-fertilise each other and/or converge or not.** In this light, the research could also give fuel to the debate about the robustness of the two concepts in research and policy.

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