

# Polycentric Urban Development and Rural-Urban Partnership - Thematic Study of INTERREG and ESPON activities



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**This document is part-financed by the European Union within the INTERREG III INTERACT Programme. The ESPON Coordination Unit has been contracted to carry through this study.**

## Foreword

Polycentric urban development and rural-urban partnerships are among the key elements of territorial development and policies in Europe. This is also reflected in the work of ESPON and INTERREG regional cooperation programmes, which fund many projects working on related themes.

This report presents a first review of the work carried out by INTERREG and ESPON projects addressing polycentric urban development and rural-urban partnership. Based on this, it provides input for the discussion of possible future activities and cross-fertilisation between ESPON and INTERREG. The study has been conducted within a cooperation of the INTERACT and the ESPON 2006 Programmes facilitating thematic interaction and mutual learning across INTERREG programmes and strands.

The study has been carried out by a research team composed by Wil Zonneveld and Dominic Stead from OTB Research Institute for Housing, Mobility and Urban Studies of Delft University of Technology (the Netherlands), and Alexandre Dubois and Erik Gløersen from Nordregio, the Nordic Centre for Spatial Development (Sweden).

The research team was supported by INTERREG, INTERACT and ESPON communities, which helped in finding data on relevant projects and gave feedback to the interim report. The INTERACT Conference on "Rural-Urban Partnership and Polycentric Urban Development", in Den Haag, April 2006, offered a valuable platform for the research team to discuss the report with the interested parties.

All of this essential work on the analysis where INTERREG project activities are related to the latest ESPON findings on key territorial structures in Europe contributes to the discussions of future activities.

### **INTERACT Point Qualification and Transfer and ESPON**

<b>Summary</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1 Mutual learning	8
1.2 Presenting INTERREG and ESPON	8
1.3 Methodology	9
1.4 This report	9
<b>2 Polycentric Urban Development</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1 An outline of the general debate	10
2.2 Key ESPON findings on polycentricity	12
2.2.1 The morphological approach: Proximity	17
2.2.2 The relational approach: Networking	20
2.3 Analysis of urban networking and polycentric development through INTERREG	20
2.3.1 Cross-border cooperation	20
2.3.2 Transnational cooperation	21
2.4 INTERREG programmes and polycentricity	23
2.5 A typology of INTERREG projects dealing with polycentricity	26
2.5.1 Outline	26
2.5.2 Methodology and objectives	27
2.5.3 The distribution of INTERREG projects	27
2.6 INTERREG projects	28
2.6.1 Structure of the territory	29
2.6.2 Potentials for balanced economic development	32
2.6.3 New integrated governance systems and tools	36
2.7 INTERREG projects in the light of ESPON	38
2.8 Conclusions	47
<b>3 Rural-urban relationships</b>	<b>49</b>
3.1 An outline of the general debate	49
3.2 Key ESPON findings on rural-urban relationships	51
3.2.1 A typology of areas	51
3.2.2 A typology of relationships	54
3.3 INTERREG programmes and rural-urban relationships	56
3.4 A rural-urban typology of INTERREG projects	60
3.4.1 Methodology and outline of the typology	60
3.4.2 The distribution of INTERREG projects	61
3.5 INTERREG projects	63
3.5.1 Economic and social development	64
3.5.2 Services and facilities	70
3.5.3 Transport, energy and information	72
3.5.4 Consumption and amenity	74
3.5.5 Demography	77
3.5.6 Governance	79
3.6 Conclusions	81



<b>4</b>	<b>Conclusions and recommendations:</b>	
	<b>Future territorial cooperation and ESPON research</b>	<b>83</b>
4.1	ESPON: Becoming visible, understandable and relevant to practitioners	83
4.2	ESPON: Supporting European Territorial Cooperation	85
4.3	European Territorial Cooperation	85
4.4	Common understanding of polycentricity	87
4.5	Common understanding of urban-rural relationships	88
	<b>References</b>	<b>90</b>
	<b>Annex 1: INTERREG projects on polycentric urban development</b>	<b>91</b>
	<b>Annex 2: INTERREG projects on rural-urban relationships</b>	<b>100</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1: Fundamentally different visions of Europe's territorial structure
- Figure 2: Characterisation of FUA clusters
- Figure 3: The ESDP hypothesis of coherence between polycentric policies at different scales
- Figure 4: Observed trends do not confirm the ESDP hypothesis of coherence between polycentric policies at different scales
- Figure 5: Models of cross-border urban cooperation
- Figure 6: Flows of people and materials between urban and rural areas

## LIST OF MAPS

- Map 1: Typology of Functional Urban Areas (FUAs)
- Map 2: Typology of Metropolitan Growth Areas (MEGAs)
- Map 3: Clusters of Functional Urban Areas
- Map 4: The effect of regional polycentrism applied across Europe (for explanation see text)
- Map 5: Level of cooperation between cities within the INTERREG IIIB CADSES Programme
- Map 6: Overlay of MEGA cities identified by ESPON 1.1.1 and main INTERREG IIIB projects dealing with polycentric development
- Map 7: Overlay of first tier nodal regions and capital cities identified by ESPON 1.1.1 and main INTERREG IIIB projects dealing with polycentric development
- Map 8: Overlay of second tier nodal regions cities identified by ESPON 1.1.1 and main INTERREG IIIB projects dealing with polycentric development
- Map 9: Overlay of PUSH areas and the five INTERREG IIIB DEFRIS regions
- Map 10: PUSH and PIA in DEFRIS regions
- Map 11: Map of rural-urban typology as developed in the ESPON project 1.1.2
- Map 12: Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the six rural-urban themes
- Map 13: Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of economic and social development
- Map 14: Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of services and facilities
- Map 15: Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of transport, energy and information
- Map 16: Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of consumption and amenity
- Map 17: Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of demography
- Map 18: Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of governance

## Summary

Polycentricity and rural-urban relationships are among the key new ideas on the development of the European territory introduced by the European Spatial Development Perspective of 1999. Both concepts and their wider goals have been taken up in the INTERREG programmes carried out in the period 2000-06. Both concepts have also played a key role in the ESPON 2006 research programme carried out from 2003 onwards. This document presents a review of what has been carried out to date by INTERREG and ESPON projects dealing with polycentricity and rural-urban relationships. The aim of the study is to provide a systematic and comparative overview on the work going on in various INTERREG projects (addressing metropolitan areas, cities, town, polycentric urban development and rural-urban relationships). This study presents an analysis of the differences in thematic priorities and approaches. Mutual learning is the overall objective: How can ESPON results support the further development of activities within INTERREG programmes and what kind of urgent questions arise in INTERREG cooperation which should be taken up in future ESPON research?

Many INTERREG programmes were well under way when the ESPON 2006 programme started. This explains why the results of ESPON have found their way into INTERREG projects only partially. In order to remain relevant for the future European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) community a future ESPON programme has to carry out targeted research, for instance by testing some of the key assumptions underlying present INTERREG projects. Close relationships between the future ETC community and the ESPON research community have to be developed, for instance through the set up of communities of practice and an active communication strategy. An urgent task is the

analysis of the various ETC programmes which are currently written or decided upon. This analysis could lead to an agenda of targeted research contributing to the success of ETC in the period 2007-13. Part of this research should focus on some of the key assumptions of current INTERREG projects for instance relating to the role of small and medium-sized cities and Functional Urban Areas in social and economic development; the various ways complementarity between nearby cities can be stimulated and the conditions under which this can lead to social and economic development at the regional level; and the conditions under which strategies for agricultural and economic diversification and improvement of the business environment have success in (remote) rural areas.

In order to contribute to high quality ETC programmes and projects these programmes and projects have to be accessible to the outside world, which is only partially the case at the moment. It also of vital importance that these programmes and projects address some of the polycentricity and rural-urban issues not dealt with so far or not dealt with sufficiently. For instance, the largest urban areas in Europe tend to participate in cooperation to a far lesser degree compared with second tier cities and urban regions. Some of the flows between rural and urban areas discussed in ESPON research are currently not the object of territorial cooperation. Also the new Member States have to be stimulated to participate at levels of cooperation comparable with the older Member States. From the view point of balanced territorial development polycentricity as well as balanced rural-urban relations these are highly challenging issues for the new Member States. How to effectively deal with these issues will have to become the object of targeted ESPON research.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Mutual learning

Polycentricity and rural-urban relationships are among the key new ideas on the development of the European territory introduced by the European Spatial Development Perspective of 1999. A considerable amount of research has been carried out since then in order to determine whether actual developments are consistent with these concepts and whether it is possible to differentiate between areas and regions in the EU according to the level of polycentric development and rural-urban relationships. Two of the so called thematic studies of the ESPON programme have been devoted to this. These were project 1.1.1 focusing on polycentricity and project 1.1.2 focusing on rural-urban relationships. Polycentricity and rural-urban relationships have been touched upon in several other ESPON projects but these two are the key projects in this respect.

Next to research the concepts of polycentricity and rural-urban relationships have been the object of cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation in the context of the community initiative INTERREG. The partnerships responsible for the writing of operational programmes have been incited to take up both concepts. This has indeed happened in various degrees as will be shown in this study.

The aim of the study is to provide a systematic and comparative overview on the work going on in various INTERREG projects (addressing metropolitan areas, cities, towns, polycentric urban development and rural-urban relationships). This study presents an analysis of the differences in thematic priorities and approaches. Mutual learning is the overall objective: How can ESPON results support the further development of activities within INTERREG programmes and what kind of urgent questions arise in INTERREG cooperation which should be taken up in future ESPON research?

This report presents a review of what has been carried out to date by INTERREG and ESPON projects dealing with polycentricity and rural-urban relationships. Together with four other thematic documents on INTERREG and ESPON projects, it provides input for a synthesis report on ideas for

thematic interaction and mutual learning between INTERREG and ESPON. The aim is to have this report available at the end of 2006.

## 1.2 Presenting INTERREG and ESPON

INTERREG III is a Community Initiative which runs from 2000 to 2006. The objective of this INTERREG Initiative is to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union by promoting cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation and balanced development of the European Union territory. The initiative is financed under the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) of the Structural Funds. INTERREG III is made up of three strands (A for cross-border, B for transnational and C for interregional cooperation) and two other programmes: ESPON and INTERACT.

Under all strands of INTERREG there are projects addressing the issue of rural-urban partnership and polycentric urban development, some of these more explicitly than others. Taken together they cover activities ranging from studies, via the development of strategies or strategic partnerships to investments, and other types of activities. The perception and understanding of polycentric urban development and rural-urban partnership varies accordingly so it was assumed when starting this study. The hypothesis was that (polycentric) urban development is well covered in current INTERREG projects, especially in strand B. In the field of rural-urban relations and partnership, it was assumed that not many projects could be identified. However, when considering the implicit contribution to improved rural development through rural-urban partnership it would probably be possible to identify a series of projects. This study proves this is indeed the case.

The objective of ESPON (European Spatial Planning Observation Network) is to support policy development and to build a European scientific community in the field of European territorial development. The ESPON programme is a programme for applied research with the aim to inform policy-making, focussing on territorial structures, trends, imbalances, potentials and territorial policy impacts in an enlarged European Union. All of the applied research

undertaken within the ESPON programme addresses the territory of 29 European countries including the 25 Member States of the EU, Bulgaria, Romania as well as Norway and Switzerland.

INTERACT (INTERREG Animation Cooperation and Transfer) is also part of the INTERREG Initiative. Among the tasks of INTERACT are coordination and exchanges of experience and good practice at Community level of actions undertaken through INTERREG III. Since INTERREG III will end in 2006, INTERACT is orienting its activities more and more towards the new programming period (2007-13). In this context, ESPON has been contracted to guide thematic studies with the aim to cross-analyse project activities within INTERREG strands and ESPON and to suggest concrete project ideas for future activities in the field.

Of the themes which have been selected for thematic interaction activities is the joint theme of polycentricity and rural-urban relationships. ESPON invited OTB (Research Institute for Housing, Mobility and Urban Studies of Delft University of Technology) and Nordregio (the Nordic Centre for Spatial Development) to perform the Thematic Study on this theme.

### 1.3 Methodology

The methodology applied in drafting this study has been mainly desk research. The two institutes involved have been participating in the ESPON projects 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 and are therefore familiar with the content of these two ESPON key studies. The main part of the study has been targeted at the identification of relevant INTERREG projects, the design of a typology to categorise projects and to relate the content of projects to characteristics of European space and, finally, to compare INTERREG and ESPON results.

Information on INTERREG programmes and projects is available from the internet in varying degrees of detail. The INTERREG A strand is the least accessible of all three INTERREG strands but has nevertheless been studied using the ESPON-INTERACT database. The ESPON-INTERACT database on INTERREG IIIB has proven to be most valuable. It is important to keep in mind though that at the time of research roughly only 3 000 projects were accessible through this database out of an estimated total of approximately 9 000 IIIA and IIIB projects. Information on

INTERREG IIIC projects has been gathered from the well-structured programme websites. Some important information on the level of INTERREG IIIB programmes – key themes and budgets allocated to these themes – has been provided by the ESPON 2.3.1. project on the application of the ESDP. More explanation on the methodology of this study is presented in the following chapters, especially in the context of the design of INTERREG project typologies.

### 1.4 This report

The structure of the reports is as follows. The next chapter discusses polycentricity and compares ESPON and INTERREG. The following chapter is dedicated to rural-urban relationships. The concluding chapter draws overall conclusions and present recommendations for future ESPON research and European Territorial Cooperation or ETC. This is the new third objective of the 2007-13 structure funds, replacing the INTERREG Community Initiative. The two annexes present overviews of the short-listed INTERREG projects using the information of all databases. Extensive web research has been carried out to find additional information, most importantly the links to project web sites to enable the reader to acquire more in depth information on projects (as information on the internet is permanently changing – most importantly the presence of websites – it is important to emphasise the information on web links has been checked and updated mid September 2006). Key projects are highlighted in the two analytical chapters in the form of text boxes. Both chapters contain maps to analyse the spatial pattern of INTERREG projects and to make a comparison with ESPON research.

As for the present document, the main purpose is to stimulate a discussion on polycentricity and rural-urban relationships in INTERREG and ESPON. A draft of this report has been discussed at an international seminar held in The Hague in April 2006. The results of the discussions at this seminar and comments received in written form afterwards have been taken into consideration when finalising the report.

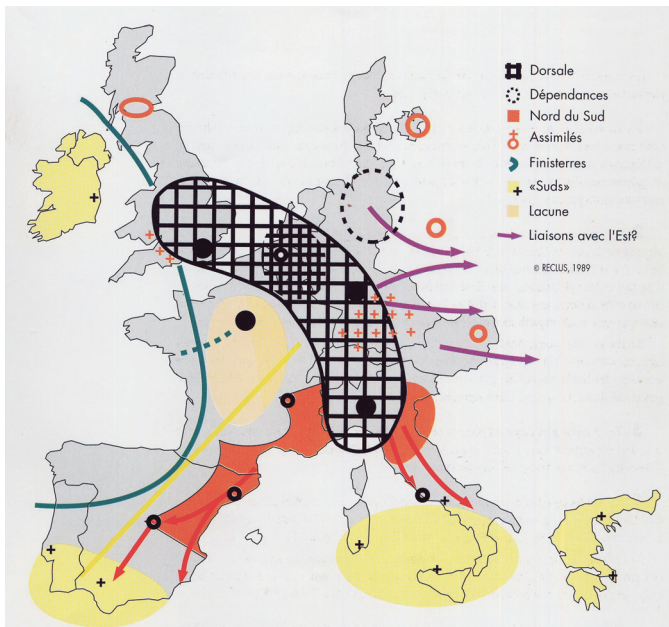
## 2 Polycentric Urban Development

### 2.1 An outline of the general debate

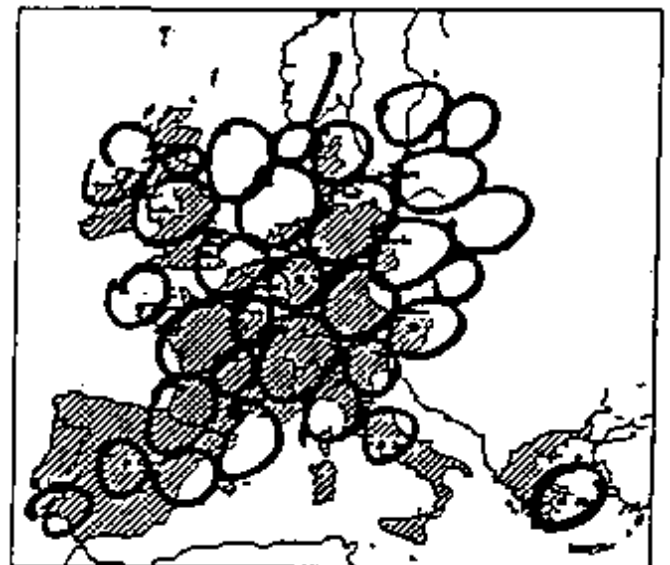
The past 10-15 years have witnessed an intensifying discussion about the territorial structure of Europe. In general terms two main types of territorial approaches of the European territory can be identified (see Figure 1). Preliminary approaches depart from the overall structure of the territory, and seek to manage these structures. The analytical basis on which this type of policies is based is illustrated by Brunet's (1989) Blue Banana representation of Europe. Brunet focuses on the overall structure of the European territory. He for example identifies a more or less continuously urbanised European core (the 'Banana'), an emerging Mediterranean axis, and a Western Atlantic periphery. Policies based on such a representation seek to connect these different parts so as to achieve a higher degree of overall territorial cohesion, or to focus on the specific challenges of certain types areas.

Another approach of Europe departs from endogenous regional potentials across Europe, and seeks to develop these across Europe. Local success stories show that growth dynamics can develop in all parts of the European territory, even when there are significant structural (territorial) constraints. The determinant factors are the development of social, economic and institutional capacities capable of taking advantage of existing opportunities. This type of approach is typically illustrated by the well known Kunzmann and Wegener (1991) 'Bunch of grapes' representation of the European territory.

Polycentric thinking typically focuses on a 'Bunch of Grapes' type of approach, focusing on local actors' capacity to take advantage of opportunities. The underlying hypothesis is that this is the most efficient approach for the generation of growth in Europe.



The Blue Banana representation of the European territory (Brunet, 1989)



The Bunch of grapes representation of the European territory (Kunzmann and Wegener, 1991)

**Figure 1**  
Fundamentally different visions of Europe's territorial structure



Polycentricity is primarily about the creation of synergies from local assets through cooperation between cities and city regions. The idea of polycentricity relates to other political ideas such as balanced regional development (cohesion), taking local assets and endowments as the point of departure for regional development and economic growth (competitiveness) and widening the ownership of political decisions (governance). Polycentricity is generally seen as the opposite to monocentricity, dispersal and urban sprawl.

Polycentricity is one of the central terms of the ESDP, although the concept is only indirectly defined by the ESDP, and retains a variety of meanings. A number of policy options in relation to polycentricity are elaborated in the ESDP and illustrate the sort of ideas behind the concept (see box). The concept of polycentricity was first mentioned at the European level in the Leipzig principles that formed the basis for the European spatial development perspective (Bundesministerium für Raumordnung, Bauwesen und Städtebau 1994). Four dimensions of polycentricity can be distinguished:

**Morphological – settlement patterns.** The most prominent dimension of polycentric development regards settlement structures, i.e. the distribution of population, buildings, and infrastructure over a territory. The location of smaller, medium sized and larger cities is characterised by long term stability and inertia, gradually influenced by location decisions and migration tenden-

cies. These trends are difficult to influence through public policies, and the effects of particular policy instruments will only become visible in the long run.

**Functional socio-economic specialisation.** The attractiveness of a place is largely influenced by its specialisation. Thus the aspect of socio-economic specialisation development of key competences and clusters needs to be considered. This aspect can be influenced through public policies, in particular with regard to the aim of structural change.

**Accessibility in terms of transportation and ICT.**

Polycentric development is also about the connections between nodes in a polycentric pattern. In particular, the proximity to transport nodes and the accessibility of information determines the endowment of places and regions that enables specific activities including cooperation and competition between different regions. It is here that public policies can exercise influence, e.g. through infrastructure investments.

**Cooperation and Interaction.** Whereas accessibility and specialisation target the potential for the development of relational and functional polycentric development, its network 'embeddedness' illustrates the use of such potentials. However, this aspect is rather difficult to measure. Nevertheless, public policies have huge potentials for developing this aspect.

### ESDP policy options relating to polycentricity

- 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.
- Strengthening a polycentric and more balanced system of metropolitan regions, city clusters and city networks through closer cooperation between structural policy and the policy on the Trans-European Networks (TENs) and improvement of the links between international/national and regional/local transport networks.
- Promoting integrated spatial development strategies for city clusters in individual Member States, within the framework of transnational and cross-border cooperation, including corresponding rural areas and their small cities and towns.
- Strengthening cooperation on particular topics in the field of spatial development through cross-border and transnational networks.
- Promoting cooperation 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 Europe and West-East links in Northern Europe.

- Expansion of the strategic role of metropolitan regions and ‘gateway cities’, giving particular attention to the development of peripheral regions of the EU.
- 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.
- 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 in less favoured regions.
- Promotion of integrated urban development strategies sensitive to social and functional diversity. Particular attention should be given to fighting social exclusion and the recycling and/or restructuring of underused or derelict urban sites and areas.
- Promotion of a wise management of the urban ecosystem.
- Promotion of better accessibility in cities and metropolitan regions through an appropriate location policy and land use planning that will stimulate mixing of urban functions and the use of public transport.

Polycentricity can be applied at three levels: The European (macro), the national and interregional (meso) and the intraregional (micro), with different operational definitions. It is this three level approach which characterises ESPON research, also in relation to other themes than polycentricity.

## 2.2 Key ESPON findings on polycentricity

When seeking to operationalise visions of the European territory, an immediate question is which are the relevant urban and regional entities which could form the building blocks of polycentricity? In other words, following the metaphor of the figure above, how can one identify the grapes of the bunch?

Faced with this challenge, ESPON 1.1.1 developed the Functional Urban Area (FUA) concept. A FUA is composed of an urban core and the surrounding commuter catchment area. Different quantitative thresholds were applied to define which FUAs were relevant for a pan-European study: The urban core needs to have at least 15 000 inhabitants and the commuter catchment area at least 20 000 inhabitants in small countries and 50 000 inhabitants in larger ones.

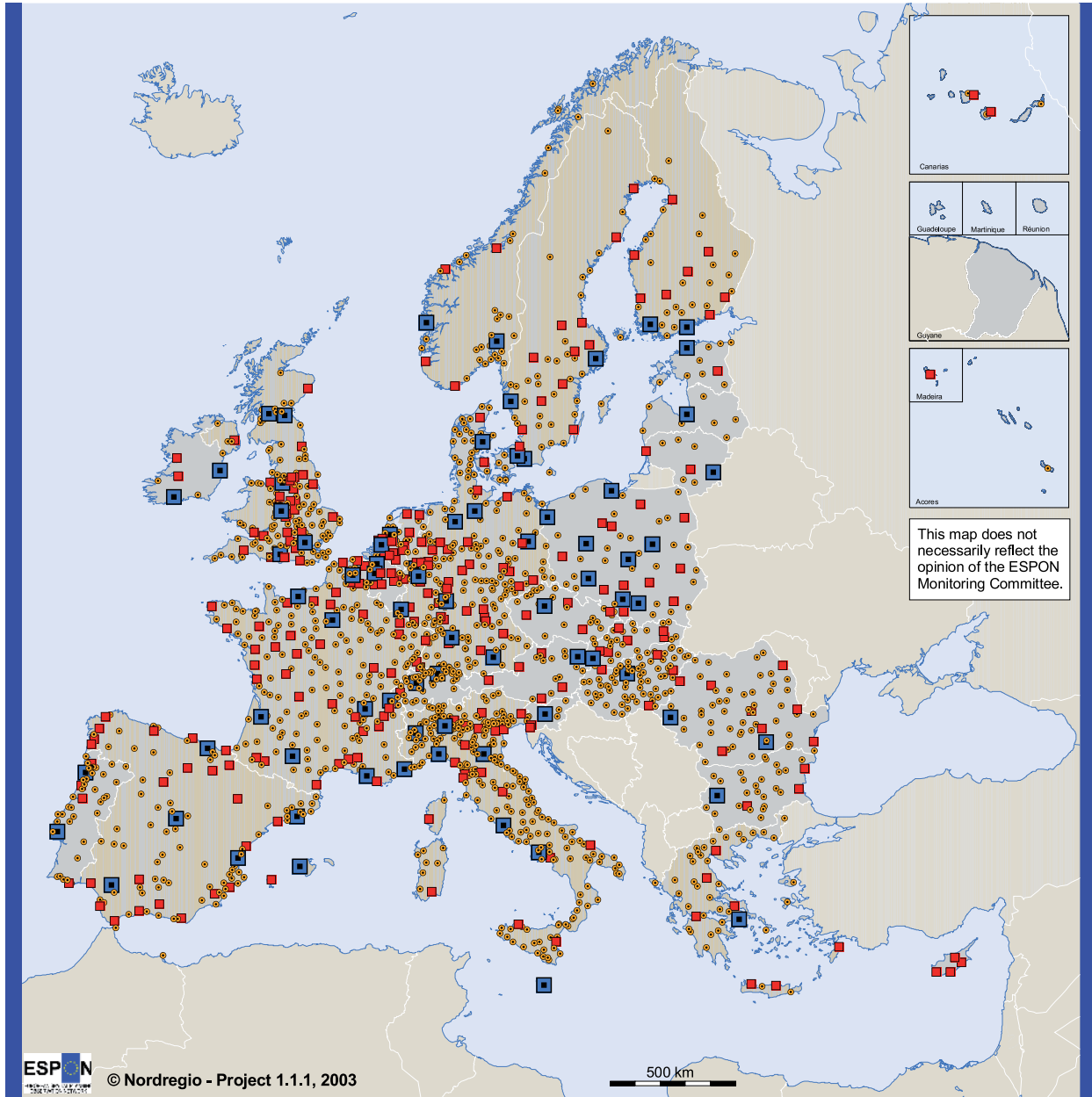
FUAs were then analysed by using seven indicators: Population, transport, knowledge, decision-making, manufacturing, tourism and administration. Those with the highest added score for the five former of these seven indicators were defined as Metropolitan European Growth Areas, or

MEGAs. The others were characterised either as transnational/national FUAs or regional/local FUAs (see Map 1).

The MEGAs were then classified again based on indicators of mass, competitiveness, transport connectivity and knowledge basis in five classes, from the Global nodes of London and Paris down to weaker MEGAs such as Turku, Gdansk, Bucharest or Valetta. The resulting map shows that high-ranking MEGAs are concentrated within the pentagon area, defined by the metropolises of London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Hamburg. The concept of the pentagon comes from the European Spatial Development Perspective. The EU had 15 Member States at that moment. In the pentagon at that stage about 50% of the EU’s total GDP was produced by 40% of the population on 20% of the total EU area. In the EU 25 the figures are even more striking: 46% of the EU’s total GDP is produced by 32% of the population on 14% of the total EU area.<sup>1</sup> In other words, at present the development of areas which could offer a counterweight to the pentagon is extremely challenging.

<sup>1</sup> Figures provided by ESPON.





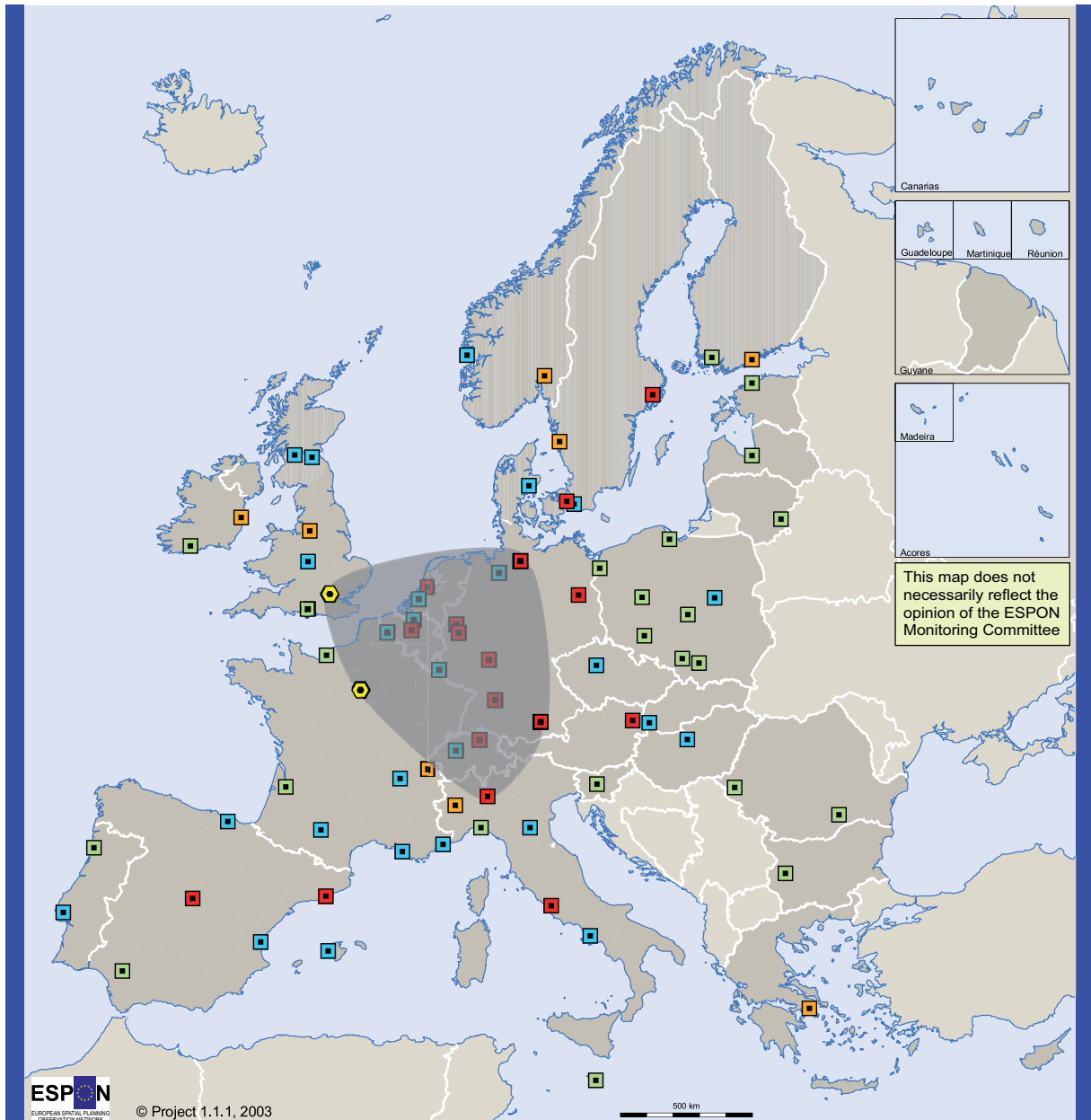
**Map 1**  
**Typology of Functional Urban Areas (FUAs)**

- Metropolitan European Growth Areas (MEGAs)
- Transnational / national FUAs
- Regional / local FUAs

Geographical Base: Eurostat GISCO

Origin of data: EUROSTAT, National Statistical Offices, National experts

Source: Nordregio



**Map 2**  
**Typology of Metropolitan Growth Areas (MEGAs)**

- Global node**
- Category 1 MEGA**
- Category 2 MEGA**
- Category 3 MEGA**
- Category 4 MEGA**

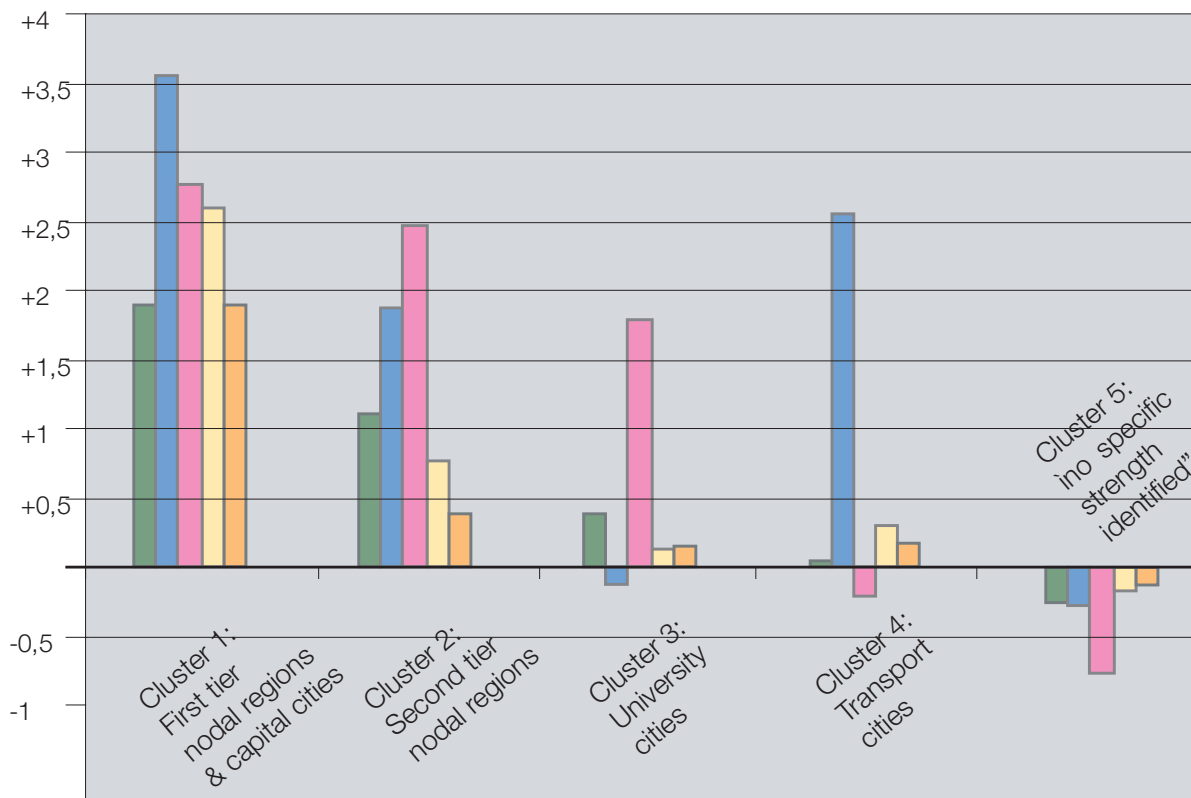
**Pentagon area**

© EuroGeographics Association for the administrative boundaries  
Origin of data: Eurostat, National Statistical Offices, National Experts  
**Source: ESPON Database**

The FUA and MEGA classifications are based on the sum of scores for all indicators. The internal correlation between these indicators is not taken account of. Because cities with a large population also tend to attract high-level functions of all kinds, the positive correlation between the indicators is high. As a result, the effect of size is taken into account multiple times in the calculations. This results in a classification which identifies the hierarchical relations between cities, but ignores specialised profiles.

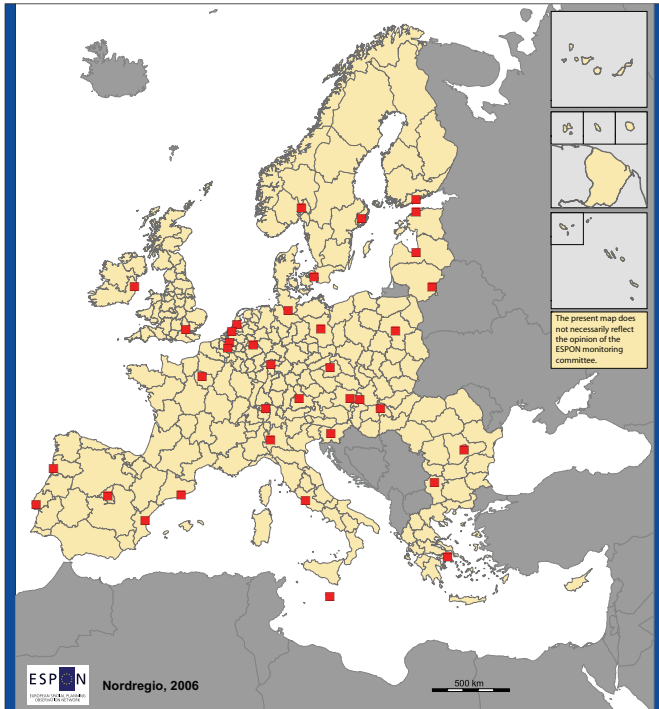
In order to compensate for this, an alternative classification of FUAs was developed. The method which was used

made it possible to isolate the effects of size and of functional specialisation. The resulting typology of FUAs is illustrated in Figure 2 and Map 3. Clusters 1 and 2 correspond to the size effect – cities which due to their large size have an over-representation of all functions. Clusters 3 and 4 have average scores in all functions except for a specific one, which can either be universities or transport. Cluster 5 shows another type of size effect, with cities that due to their small size exhibit an under-representation of all functions.

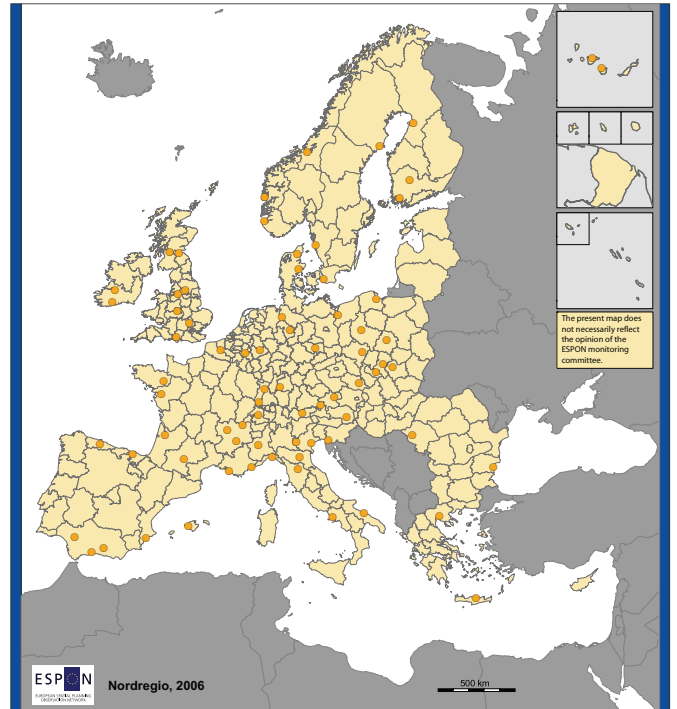


**Figure 2**  
**Characterisation of FUA clusters**

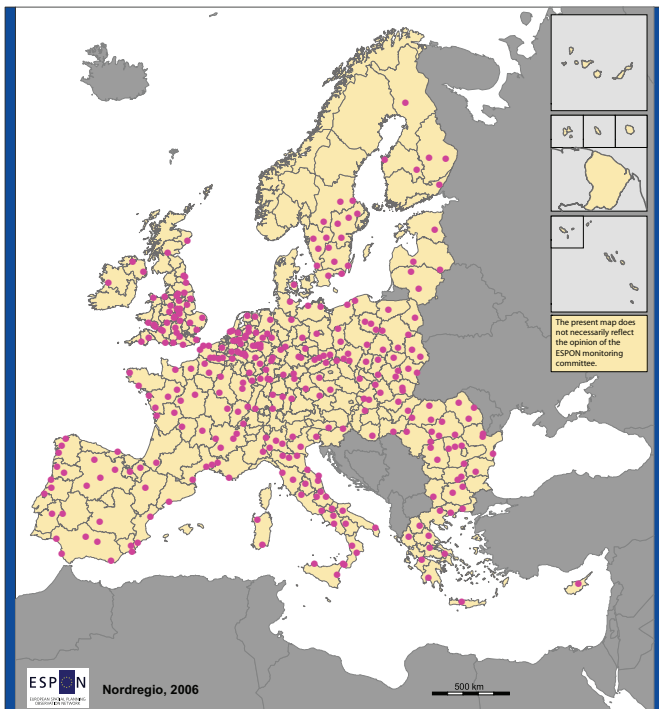
- Demographic mass
- Transport functions (air + maritime)
- Knowledge function (university students)
- Private sector decision-making
- Administrative function



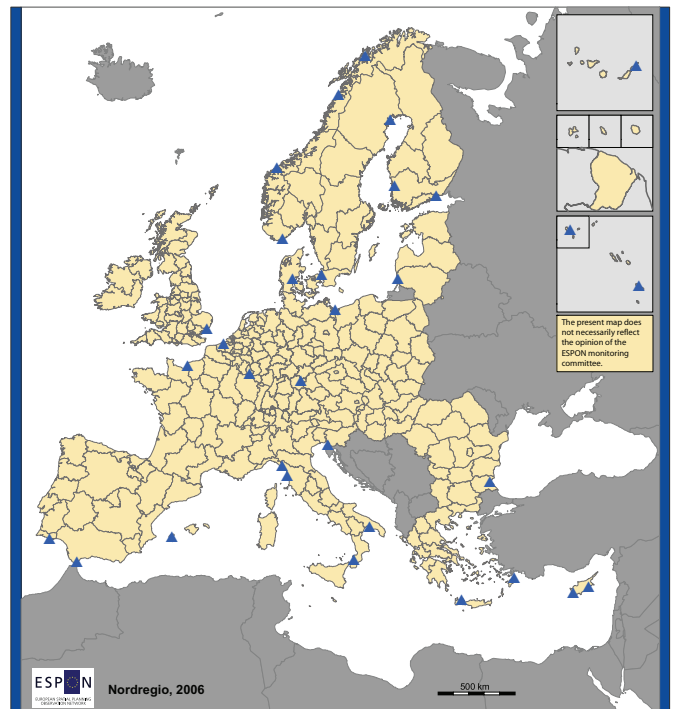
**a) Cluster 1:  
First tier nodal regions & capital cities**



**b) Cluster 2:  
Second tier nodal regions**

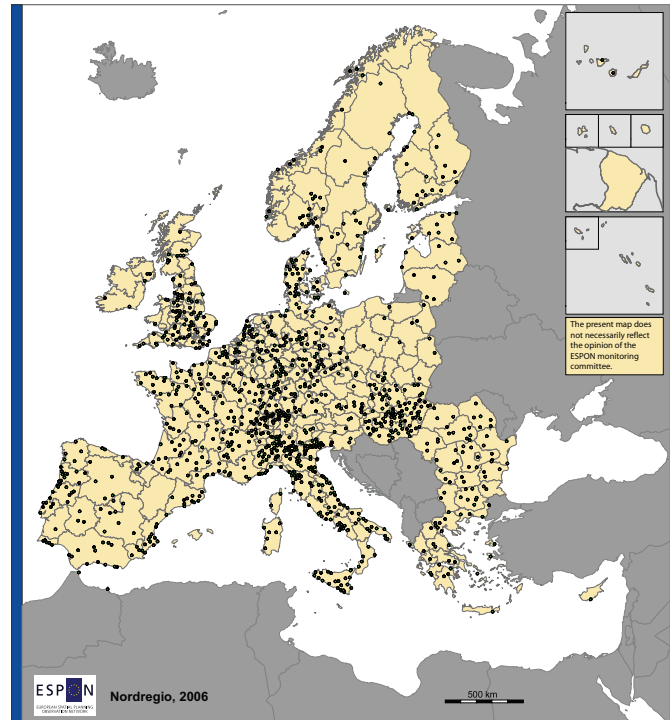


**c) Cluster 3:  
University cities**



**d) Cluster 4:  
Transport cities**

**Map 3  
Clusters of Functional Urban Areas**



**e) Cluster 5:  
“no specific strength identified”**

### 2.2.1 The morphological approach: Proximity

Both these typologies of FUAs however do not take into account the potential for integration between neighbouring MEGAs, or between MEGAs and other surrounding cities: How could for example a polycentric policy of further integration between Vienna and Bratislava, or between Copenhagen and Malmö change the hierarchical patterns in the European urban system?

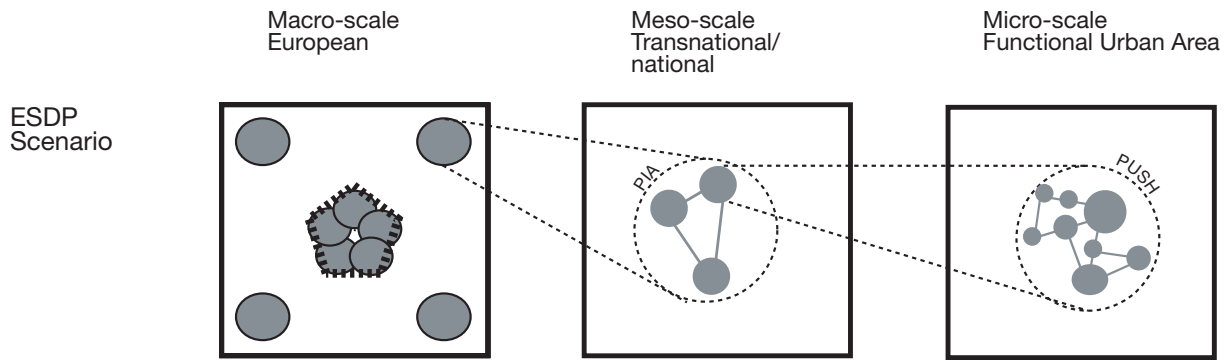
A central idea in the ESDP approach to polycentricity is indeed that polycentric development at the intra-urban and inter-urban scale can contribute to a more polycentric European continent, as urban entities outside the pentagon are strengthened through cooperation and can potentially constitute alternatives to the pentagon.

In order to take account of these *interscalar* dimension of polycentricity, and identify where the greatest potential for further integration between neighbouring cities is to be

found, the previously described FUA analysis considering cities as individual ‘isolated islands’ is not sufficient. The geographical context of cities needs to be considered.

The primary geographical context of each city was thought to be the area from which it is possible to commute to each city. As a proxy for this area, ESPON 1.1.1 calculated the area accessible within 45 minutes by car around each FUA centre (train accessibility could unfortunately not be considered because of the lack of data). These areas were then approximated to municipal boundaries, in order to build groups of local governance areas that can be presumed to have a specific interest in developing joint strategic actions. The resulting delimitations were designated as Potential Urban Strategic Horizons, or PUSH.

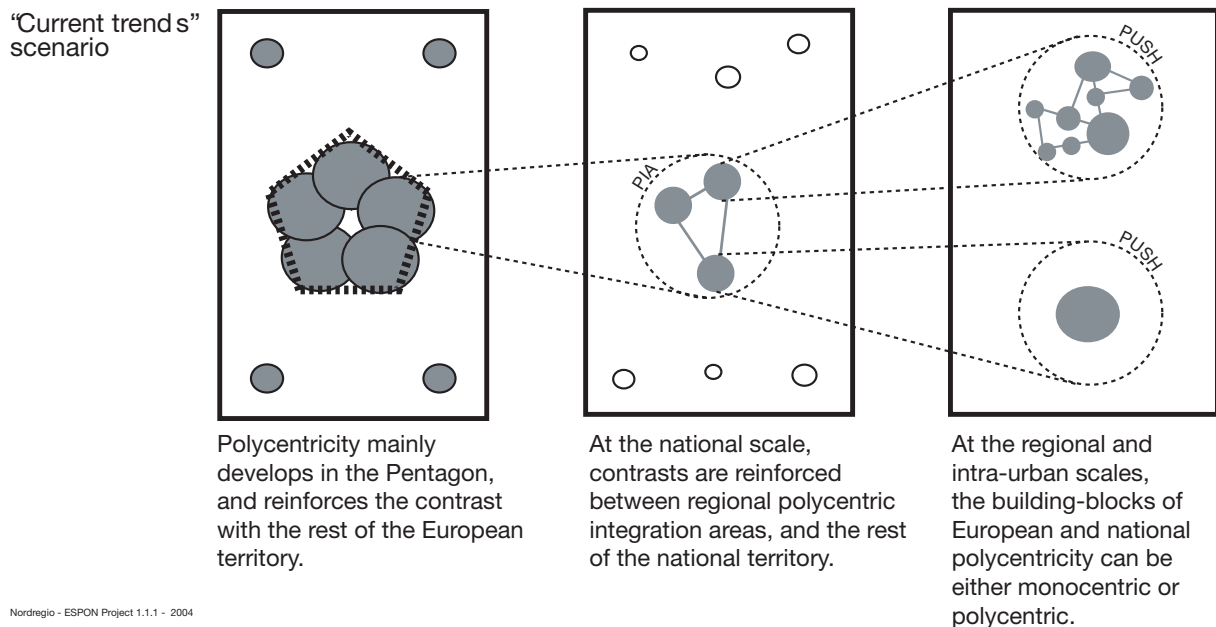
The fundamental difference between PUSH and FUA is that the PUSH areas overlap, reflecting the fact that urban influence areas are not mutually exclusive. A large number of municipalities therefore belong to multiple PUSH areas.



Nordregio - ESPON Project 1.1.1 - 2004

**Figure 3**

**The ESDP hypothesis of coherence between polycentric policies at different scales**



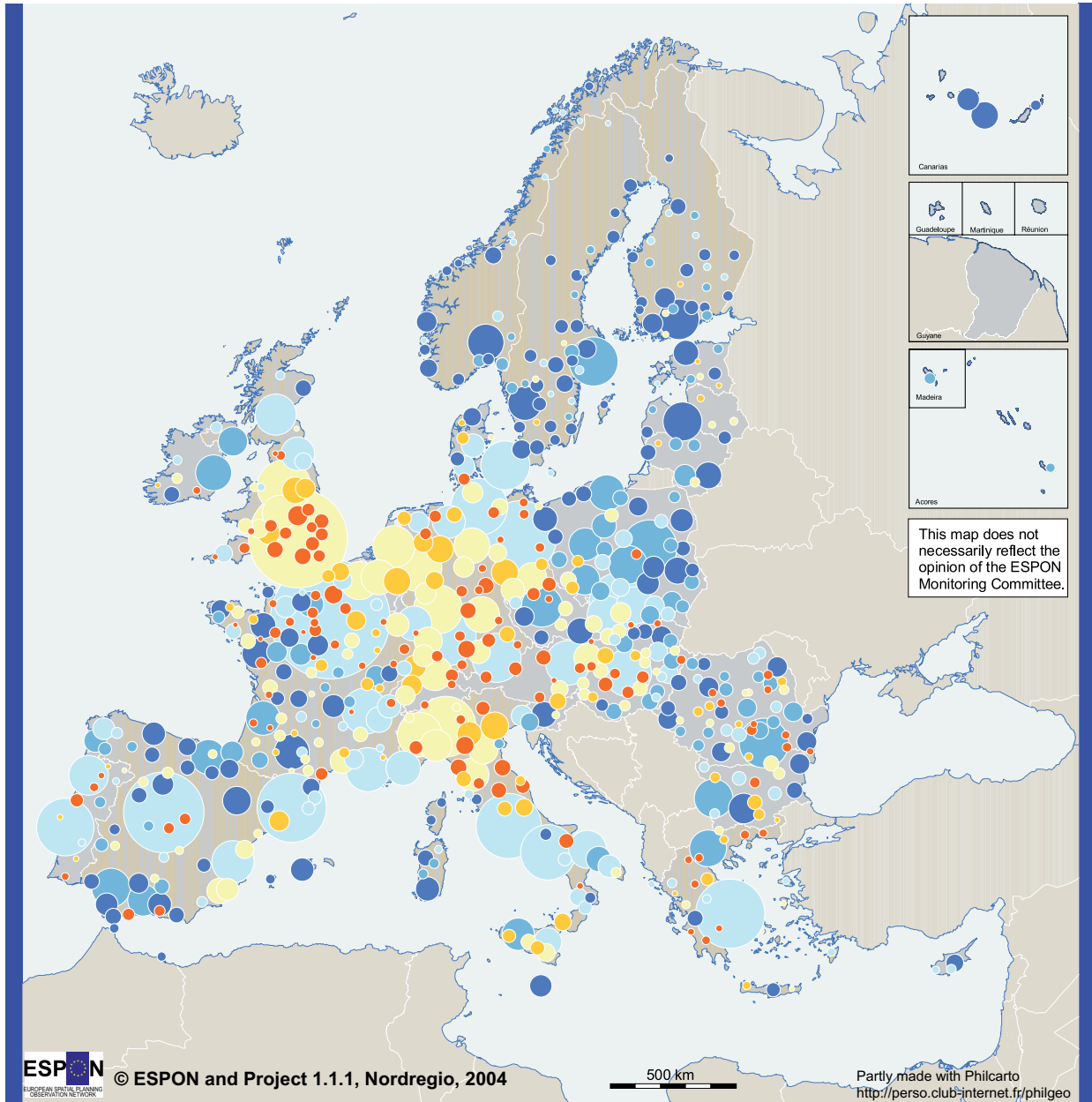
Nordregio - ESPON Project 1.1.1 - 2004

**Figure 4**

**Observed trends do not confirm the ESDP hypothesis of coherence between polycentric policies at different scales**

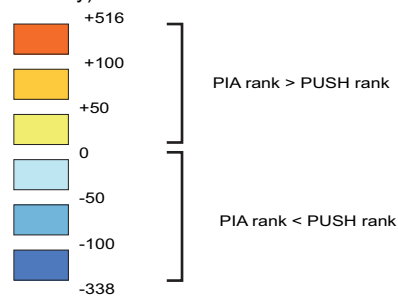
Their population can then commute to different cities, and potentially access a wider range of goods and services. Companies equally benefit from such overlap through access to a wider labour market, to larger numbers of consumers and to production inputs. In situations where the overlap covers a major part of a PUSH, the growth strategies for the two labour markets can be intimately connected. They could furthermore benefit from a more integrated development, allowing them to accumulate a higher popu-

lation mass and to exploit their complementarities. The question is however what this would imply for the territorial balance of the European territory. To answer this question, ESPON 1.1.1 explored a theoretical scenario in which all cities whose PUSH overlaps with more than 33% with a neighbouring city create a polycentric integration area, or PIA. Based on this hypothesis, one can then compare the ranks of the most important city in each PIA, and those of the PIAs after polycentric integration has occurred. The result-

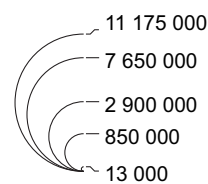


**Map 4**  
**The effect of regional polycentricity applied across Europe:**  
**Comparing the European rank of individual cities and that of their respective PIA**

Difference between the European rank of individual cities (according to their PUSH population), and that of corresponding PIA (considering the main node of each PIA only).



FUA population according to national FUA definition



**Geographical Base: Eurostat GISCO**

Origin of data:  
EUROSTAT, National Statistical Offices  
National experts

Data sources:  
Nordregio, ESPON NUTS 5 database

PUSH delimitation: RRG  
PIA identification: Nordregio



ing changes in the hierarchy are illustrated in Map 4. The map bears the term ‘mechanical’ in its title as this image was made on the basis of a set of statistical ‘rules’. One can clearly see that all larger cities gaining relative importance in the hierarchy are situated in the European core. Polycentric integration mechanically applied at the regional scale in other words leads to further contrasts between core and periphery at the continental scale.

This leads us to question the ESDP hypothesis of an inter-scalar coherence of polycentric development strategies at different levels, as illustrated by Figure 4 (the main differences with the ‘voluntaristic’ scenario of the ESDP illustrated by Figure 3 are summarised in the figure itself). These contradictions should not lead us to conclude that polycentricity is not a valid policy objective. They do, however, point out that there is a need to establish political compromises between the objectives of polycentric development at different scales: A European polycentric development focusing on national nodal regions can lead to increased polarisation within each country; a policy in favour of integrated regional polycentric development because of its distribution effects can increase the contrast between the European core areas and the rest of the continent.

### **2.2.2 The relational approach: Networking**

Other interpretations of polycentricity have however emerged, emphasising relational aspects (i.e. the relations between cities and urban regions), the importance of specialisation and the empowerment of urban regions. With such alternative approaches, polycentricity can be a valid policy objective in all parts of the European territory, and does not need to lead to increased contrasts between the core and the periphery. Polycentric development is mainly seen as being about encouraging cities and towns to adopt a more cooperative, networked and proactive attitude to their own development. Capacity building is in this respect the main element of polycentric development.

A European polycentric policy focused on capacity building will have the greatest impact in areas where the local economic and institutional capacity is the weakest. This will typically be the case in urban centres developing in the shadow of greater metropolitan areas, and in peripheral European regions. A bottom-up approach to relational

polycentric development centred on capacity building can therefore have a favourable effect on territorial imbalances both within large metropolitan regions and between the core and the periphery of the European territory.

## **2.3 Analysis of urban networking and polycentric development through INTERREG**

ESPON 1.1.1 has reviewed urban networking and polycentric development developed through INTERREG projects. The two different scales at which INTERREG addresses integration between countries is here dealt with separately.

### **2.3.1 Cross-border cooperation**

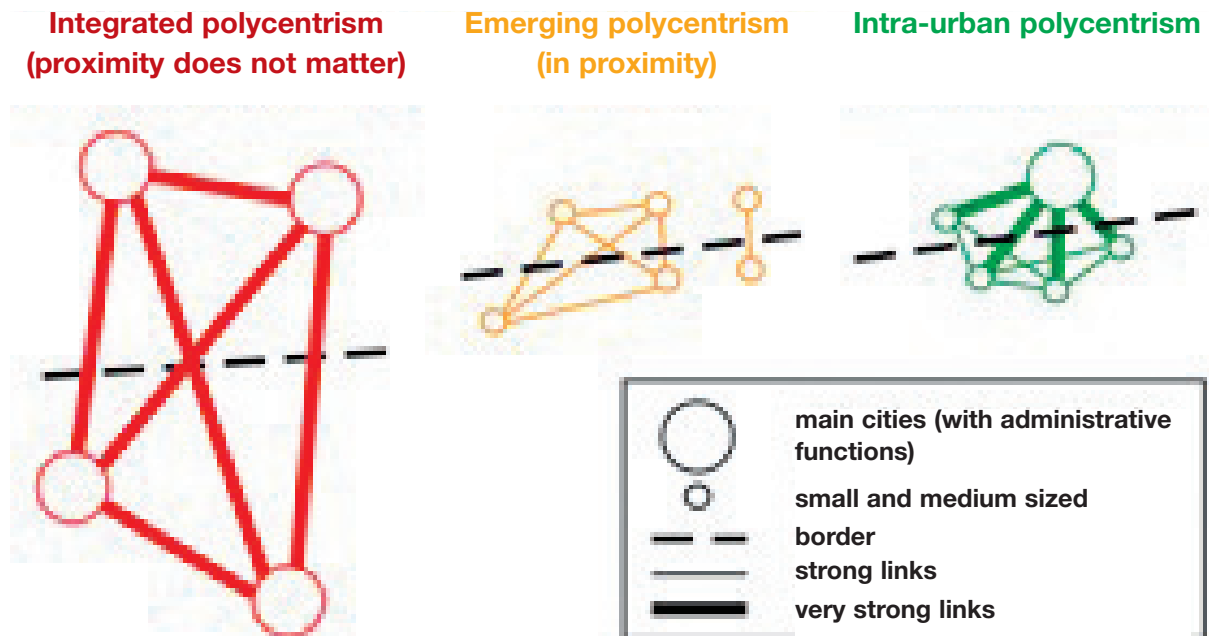
Based on an analysis of INTERREG IIC cooperation along the French-Belgian and French-German border, three types of cross-border cooperation within INTERREG were identified by ESPON 1.1.1 (see Figure 5). This typology essentially shows the importance of distinguishing cooperation based on networks (type 1) and on proximity (types 2 and 3), and the inter-urban scale (types 1 and 2) from the intra-urban one (type 3).

The first type (Nordregio et alia 2004: 174) corresponds to an integrated polycentricity where proximity does not matter. The main cities in terms of population size or administrative function are in contact via a large number of projects. Their physical proximity to the border or to each other has no major influence on their relations.

The second type is that of an emerging polycentricity. Small and medium-sized towns located close to the border are increasingly involved in (INTERREG) projects. The closer they are to the border, the more they enter into some form of relations with each other.

The third type of networking through transborder cooperation is related to an intra-urban polycentricity. When a large city is located close to the border, there are often strong relations between this city and the small towns on the other side of the border. This is the case with the French city of Lille, and also with the Swiss city of Basel.





**Figure 5**  
**Models of cross-border urban cooperation**

### 2.3.2 Transnational cooperation

In terms of transnational cooperation, ESPON 1.1.1 focused on the INTERREG IIC areas NWMA (North-West Metropolitan Area) and CADSES (Central European, Adriatic, Danubian and South-East Space). The empirical review of these programmes concludes that:

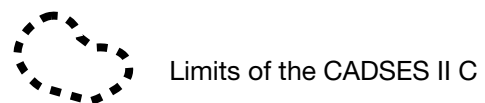
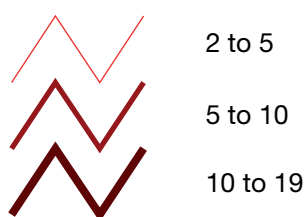
- Cooperation patterns are determined by national administrative systems rather than by the actual distribution of cities. This means that project participation is limited to capital cities in countries with a centralistic tradition, while it is more evenly spread out in countries with a federal or decentralised structure.
- Linguistic factors partly explain the level of involvement in transnational cooperation. Countries or regions with a good knowledge of English (in the NWMA case) or German (concerning CADSES) tend to have a higher level of project participation.

When compiling the number of project participations between cities in the CADSES Programme (see Map 5), a concentric pattern structured around Vienna and Budapest emerged (Cristescu, 2004). It therefore appears that transnational INTERREG programmes do not necessarily lead to the emergence of equally spread out patterns of cooperation, but may at the contrary facilitate the emergence of sub-continental entities (also called ‘Small Europes’) organised around main nodes. The difficulty of defining actions undertaken to promote a better territorial balance at the European level, which would be consistent with national or regional polycentric policies is, here again, apparent.



**Map 5**  
**Level of cooperation between cities within the INTERREG IIB CADSES Programme**

Number of co-operations on more than two projects



Source: Database J.Cristescu, 2004

## 2.4 INTERREG programmes and polycentricity

The application of polycentricity in INTERREG can be analysed at two levels, at the level of programmes and at the level of projects. Investigations at the programme level focus on how terms related to polycentricity are used for defining priorities and measures found in the Programme Documents for each INTERREG area. This Programme Document provides the framework for project selection. Our analysis starts with this level.

The project-team has performed an overview of the INTERREG IIB Programme Documents, most of them available on the INTERREG programmes websites, in order to extract the priorities and measures that were either explicitly or implicitly dealing with the theme of polycentric development. In addition, this analysis has been crossed with the results of research undertaken in the framework of the ESPON project 2.3.1, which focused on the application and effects of the ESDP at the EU level and in the Member States (the same approach has been followed in the next chapter on rural-urban relationships).

The results of this joint analysis have been synthesised in Table 1. This table shows that the interpretation of the concept is wide and strongly influenced by perceptions of the area's particular challenges and objectives, and its territorial context. Another important feature is that budgets allocated to those measures - as a share of the total programme budget – sometimes do vary considerably between the programmes. This provides us with a basis for approaching how polycentricity is implemented in the INTERREG context. Another conclusion which can be drawn is that in quite a few programmes the relevant measure for projects focussing on polycentricity is rather broadly formulated encompassing other issues as well. Below we highlight some of the programmes.

The IIB MEDOCC Programme Document defines the main points that should be dealt with as regards the polycentric development of the area. First of all, the economic integration of different macro-regions is emphasised, in order to foster the *development of Zones of Global Economic Integration*. Moreover, the development of strong networks of medium-sized towns is seen as essential for enhancing a polycentric MEDOCC area. Measure 2.1 focuses on the

integration of macro-regions inside the MEDOCC area by elaborating spatial visions, but also through developing new methods and objectives concerning territorial development, as well as forming strategic alliances between cities and towns.

In the Atlantic Area the thematic focus of the priorities and measures is twofold. On the one hand the Programme Document emphasises the importance of the *spatial structuring of the Atlantic Area*. This structure can be improved by reinforcing the role of metropolitan areas as gateways to larger European and global markets and by strengthening the linkages between small and medium-sized towns. On the other hand, increased polycentricity can be achieved through the *promotion of centres of excellence*, selected so as to promote a more balanced economic development across the Atlantic Area. More generally, the development of spatial strategies is promoted as a tool for enhancing the polycentric spatial structure of the region.

The Alpine Space Programme Document refers to polycentric spatial development in its first priority, but the term is not referred to again in the related measures. The main objective as regards polycentricity in the Alpine Space is to promote the area as an attractive macro-region inside the EU. The Programme Document focuses on polycentric development on a macro scale, paying less attention to polycentric policies at the meso- or micro-level as a means of achieving this.

In the South-West Europe area, polycentricity is understood as reinforcing the urban systems (Strengthen and consolidate the South-West Europe urban system). Spatial visions will have to elaborate the principle that the area can function as a counterweight (or 'pôle d'équilibre') to the core regions of Europe. The promotion of Centres of excellence is seen as a way of achieving a better complementarity between urban areas.

The CADSES Programme Document is not referring explicitly to polycentricity in its priorities and measures, but Measure 1.2, entitled Shaping urban development, promoting urban networks and cooperation, is focusing on the development of multipolar systems based on economic specialisation and labour complementarities between towns and cities.

**Table 1 Occurrence of polycentricity in INTERREG IIIB programmes**

Programme	Measure	% budget (total ERDF- budget in mecu)	Wording
<b>Alpine Space</b>	1.2	7.6 (60.6)	Competitiveness and sustainable development*
<b>ARCHIMED</b>	1.2	3.3 (79.5)	Assistance for urban centres, rural areas and growth of cooperation between them*
<b>Atlantic Area</b>	A.1	17.8	Spatial Structuring of the Atlantic Area*
	A.2	(118.7)	Promotion and development of centres of excellence
<b>Madeira-Azores- Canary Islands</b>	1.1	3.9 (136.0)	Urban socio-economic development
<b>Baltic Sea Region (BSR)</b>	1.1	28.2	Supporting joint strategies and implementation actions for larger development zones*
	2.1	(100.2)	Promoting balanced polycentric settlement structures
<b>Caribbean Space</b>	1.5	<5.4 (12.0)	Improving cooperation between both urban and rural areas*
<b>Central and Danubian Space (CADSES)</b>	1.2	12.8 (153.7)	Shaping urban development, promoting urban networks and cooperation
<b>Indian Ocean/ Réunion</b>	1.5	26 (5.0)	Regional technical skills
<b>Northern Periphery</b>	--		No explicit mention of Polycentricity in the Programme Document
<b>North Sea</b>	1.1	9.0 (129.3)	Elaboration and implementation of transnational polycentric spatial development strategies and polycentrism
	1.2		Development and implementation of urban complementarity, cooperation and networking
<b>North West Europe (NWE)</b>	1.1	19.1 (328.6)	More attractive metropolitan areas in the global and European context
	1.2		Coherent and polycentric pattern of complementary cities, towns and rural areas, coastal and peripheral areas*
<b>South-West Europe (SUDOE)</b>	1.1	7.0 (66.0)	Strengthen and consolidate SUDOE's urban system
<b>Western Mediterranean (MEDOCC)</b>	2.1	152 (103.6)	Territorial and urban development: Developing cooperation and coherent strategies

\* Projects on rural-urban relationships fall under the same measure.

Source: INTERREG IIIB Programme Documents and ESPON project 2.3.1

In the Baltic Sea Programme Document, the promotion of spatial strategies is seen as a means to promote the integration of macro-regions in the BSR (Measure 1.1). Measure 2.1 is concentrating on the endorsement of best practices between regions and metropolitan areas in order to foster a polycentric settlement development.

The North Sea Programme Document is referring to the notion of polycentricity in its measures in two ways: Firstly, by enhancing the creation of zones of global economic integration based on its metropolitan regions (Measure 1.1); and secondly, by developing complementarities between urban centres and especially focusing on the revitalisation of small and medium-sized towns.

The NWE Programme, which can be said to correspond to an enlarged 'pentagon' area, is focusing on the improvement of the (economic) attractiveness of the metropolitan areas in a global and European context (thus macro) (Measure 1.1), but also on the enhancement of complementarities between lower tiers of cities and towns, creating a more polycentric pattern of the territory (Measure 1.2).

Finally, no explicit mention of polycentricity has been found in the Programme Document of the Northern Periphery, as the priorities seek to improve communication networks and to enhance the potential for sustainable economic development in the region.

In the same manner, the Programme Documents of the INTERREG IIIC zones have also been covered by the project team, but the analysis of these documents has shown no explicit consideration for polycentricity: The Programme Documents do not list specific thematic priorities or measures. The analysis concerning the INTERREG IIIC zones will then need to be dealt with directly at the project level.

The main objectives and measures of the INTERREG IIIA programmes have also been investigated, as available on the official EU webpage dedicated to it. A first comment is that there is no reference to polycentric development in the 'priorities for action' of the INTERREG IIIA programme as a whole, neither in the priorities of the 64 INTERREG IIIA areas' programme. Nevertheless, some topics that are closely related to polycentric development have been identified in some specific programmes. As an example, in both IIIA Upper Rhine Centre-South (Germany-France-Switzerland) and IIIA Franco-British Programmes, a priority is dedicated to the promotion of 'balanced spatial development'. In the same manner, the INTERREG IIIA Italy – Switzerland area prioritises the 'Balanced and sustainable development of the economy of the cross-border area'. Echoing the emphasis made by Hague and Kirk (2003) of polycentric development as a means to remove the barriers for cooperation, some INTERREG IIIA programmes (Oresund Region, France-Wallonia-Flanders, Ems Dollard Region) puts the emphasis in their priorities on bridging the physical (lagging infrastructure networks) or administrative (national boundaries) obstacles to cooperation.

Overall, the analysis of the use of polycentricity for shaping the priorities and measures of the INTERREG III projects provides two main types of outputs. Firstly, it enables us to have a better insight on the themes that are more particularly linked to this notion, when it comes to its application in a transnational context. Secondly, it shows that the interpretation of those particular themes is dependent on the territorial or socio-economic pre-conditions found across Europe.

## 2.5 A typology of INTERREG projects dealing with polycentricity

### 2.5.1 Outline

The review of the main findings of the ESPON 1.1.1. and the use of polycentricity in INTERREG Programme Documents has enabled us to distinguish two particular axis of analysis.

On the one hand, the ESPON 1.1.1 results indicate that a strictly spatial approach of polycentricity leads to contradictions between scales. One hypothesis is that a network approach of polycentricity, that is to say the improvement of interactions between actors, could stimulate a more balanced development.

On the other hand, a question that arises in the ESPON 1.1.1 report, and that has not been fully addressed, is how the centres of polycentric development are constituted and empowered. Is a centre fundamentally the result of polarising social and economic processes, such as those who generate regional integrated labour markets around certain urban nodes? Or should the centre also be understood as a source of economic and political impulses, which can result from institutional dynamics and proactive policies as well as from social and economic processes?

These are the questions which underpin the analysis of INTERREG projects below. The three scales defined by the ESDP and applied in ESPON may be useful didactically, to

communicate results, and politically to formulate policies. The question is whether they function analytically when trying to distinguish different polycentric dynamics and the various ways these dynamics are approached within the context of INTERREG?

On the basis of an overview of the INTERREG projects belonging to the measures dealing with polycentric development results we have identified three broad types of themes relating to polycentric dynamics. The themes and the main notions that they relate to are synthesised in Table 2.

The first theme at stake is operationalising polycentricity in order to achieve a certain spatial structure of the territory, with multiple connected centres creating a more balanced urban system. Key issues are related to housing, living environment, optimising the management of land-use and creating pre-conditions for efficient public modes of transportation. The objective of INTERREG projects dealing with this dimension is often to define a new spatial framework in which this functional coherence could be achieved.

The second main dimension linked to polycentric development is relating it to potentials for balanced economic development. In this case, polycentric development is understood as a way to improve the distribution of economic activities over a certain territory. Key issues are the location of production and the local territorial context for entrepreneurship. The objective of INTERREG projects dealing with this dimension is to improve the comparative advantages within a given zone.

**Table 2** Typology of INTERREG projects focussing on polycentricity

Type	Keywords/key issues
<b>1. Spatial structure of the territory</b>	Polycentric spatial development; metropolitan regions; spatial integration; polycentric urban systems
<b>2. Potentials for balanced economic development</b>	Global Integration Zones; balanced territorial development; centres of excellence; complementarity; development of specialised second tier urban centres
<b>3. New integrated systems of governance</b>	Regeneration; revitalisation; integrated spatial planning; joint development strategy; governance; empowerment of secondary urban nodes; identification and implementation of endogenous development potentials



Finally, a further category of projects is interpreting polycentric development in terms of new integrated systems of governance, enabling towns and regions to further develop their capabilities. Key issues are institutional arrangements and the empowerment of local and regional entities. INTERREG projects dealing with this dimension generally focus on exchanging experiences, and developing networks between actors dealing with comparable challenges.

### 2.5.2 Methodology and objectives

Departing from the measures in the INTERREG programmes dealing with polycentricity (see section 2.4), relevant projects from the ESPON-INTERACT INTERREG IIIB project-database belonging to those measures have been extracted. The same has been done in relation to the project-database for INTERREG IIIC projects available on the programme homepage. In this way we assembled a long list containing approximately 150 projects. From this selection of projects, the project-team has performed an initial categorisation leaving from the descriptions of projects to be found in the ESPON-INTERACT database. The project-team has also investigated the ESPON-INTERACT INTERREG IIIA database. Due to the large number of projects in the database (approximately 3 500), the project team has not systematically looked into project homepages (which have only limited availability anyway), but has performed a search using the keywords presented in Table 2.

The final step for the typology has been to seek more information on the web pages of INTERREG projects, if available, in order to have a better insight in the project's main objectives and key-actions. This final step has enabled the project-team to select a number of projects that were identified as relevant to illustrate the typology, and that had enough material available in order for the project-team to perform a more in-depth analysis of the projects. To carry out this task we have constructed a typology or matrix. This enabled us to identify the main dynamics addressed by INTERREG projects regarding polycentric development and to assess in what way projects – potentially - contribute to polycentricity. These dynamics are identified as a combination of a theme (governance, economic, spatial) and a geographical dimension (micro, meso, and macro).

Basically, the application of this typology implies the combination of the micro, meso and macro scales with the above-

mentioned themes in our analysis of the INTERREG projects. The primary objective of this typology is not to establish a strict classification of all projects, but to improve the understanding of the complexity and stakes of the interaction between different scales of polycentric development. It will also constitute a grid for an assessment of the general coherence of polycentric initiatives within INTERREG.

As the application of the typology to the INTERREG projects will show, the nine resulting types are not mutually exclusive: Often a project belongs to more than one category because it focuses on several polycentric dynamics.

### 2.5.3 The distribution of INTERREG projects

The tables presented in this section provide an overview of the distribution of the projects between the three main themes considered. Table 3 compares the selection of projects in the three strands of INTERREG (A, B and C). It is worth reminding the reader that the aim of the study is not to produce an exhaustive classification of projects dealing with polycentricity, but to identify the main dynamics developed by INTERREG projects in order to better understand how polycentric development is put into practice in the INTERREG context.

Only few INTERREG IIIC projects have been identified as relevant for pursuing our analysis on polycentric development. This is due to the fact that the INTERREG IIIC programmes focus on interregional cooperation, allowing regions without joint borders to work together in common projects and develop networks of cooperation. Project partners are often spread out across the entire EU territory, and generally focus on sharing best practice within given sectors of activity, rather on *territorial* issues.

INTERREG IIIB programmes on the contrary have a clear territorial dimension, being written for specific areas. Nonetheless, while more than 150 INTERREG IIIB projects belonged to measures directly linked with polycentric development, only 37 of these were evaluated as useful for the purpose of our analysis. Table 4 below displays the distribution of projects between our three identified topics and INTERREG IIIA, IIIB and IIIC.

It can seem surprising that so few of the projects belonging to a measure focusing on polycentric development or a

closely connected notion are actually dealing with polycentricity. There are two main reasons to this. The first explanation is that many projects and programmes have applied wide interpretations of polycentric development. Some took a local perspective, in particular those focusing on tourism or urban-rural relationships (which is analysed in the next chapter). Others considered that the constitution of a 'network of actors/regions' would be sufficient to characterise the project as a polycentric initiative, irrespective of the theme that was dealt with. This interpretation is not entirely unfounded, as collaboration can indeed contribute to polycentric development. However, as INTERREG programmes are dedicated to creating networks of actors and regions, applying such a wide perspective on polycentricity would lead us to consider all INTERREG projects as relevant. Consequently, the selected projects are the ones that were addressing in their objectives and actions one of the identified topics related to polycentricity and potentially contributing to the achievement of a more polycentric development in the EU.

The second reason for excluding certain projects from the selection is the lack of accessible information. This made it impossible to understand the main objectives of some projects and to produce an account of the actions that had been carried out. This is particularly the case for the IIIA projects, which seldom have a page on the internet, or information available in English. This de facto restricts the possibility to include them in the analysis.

Table 4 presents the breakdown of the 37 INTERREG IIIB projects by programme area and by topic. Three areas dominate this overview: The Baltic Sea Region (nine projects), the North West Region (seven projects) and CADSES (seven projects).

## 2.6 INTERREG projects

Above we have set the framework for the analysis of how the notion of polycentricity is applied in INTERREG projects. By highlighting the main issues in the ongoing debates on polycentricity, either in research or in politics, the previous sections were intended to put into perspective the main issues at stake, when putting polycentricity into practice. This review has led to the definition of a matrix or grid, combining three territorial scales (micro, meso, and macro) and three themes (spatial, economic, governance). This matrix provides the outline of a typology of INTERREG projects. The main objective of the analysis in this section is to provide a synthesis of how the projects operationalise polycentricity. We gradually build up the blocks of our typology: Every sub-section summarises the main results of the analysis by filling in three cells of our matrix. At the end of this section we are able to present and discuss the entire matrix.

Needless to say, the aim of this analysis is not an evaluation or measurement of which project is more contributing to polycentric development than another, but, on the contrary, how we can have a better understanding of how each selected project is interpreting the notion of polycentric development and how all are potentially adding a brick to the edifice of 'polycentric Europe'. In each of the three following thematical sections INTERREG projects will be discussed following the ESPON micro-meso-macro approach.

**Table 3** Distribution of selected projects over the INTERREG programmes

Type	INTERREG IIIA*	INTERREG IIIB*	INTERREG IIIC	Total
<b>1. Structure of the territory</b>	3	10	1	14
<b>2. Economic development</b>	4	13	2	19
<b>3. Governance</b>	1	14	3	18
<b>Total</b>	8	37	6	51

\* Only the approx 3 000 available projects in the ESPON-INTERACT database in spring 2006 are investigated.



**Table 4** Distribution of project types over INTERREG IIIB programme areas

	Structure of the territory		Economic development	Governance	Total
<b>Alpine Space</b>				1	1
<b>Atlantic Area</b>	1		2	1	4
<b>Baltic Sea Region</b>	3		3	3	9
<b>CADSES</b>	4		2	1	7
<b>North Sea Region</b>				2	2
<b>North West Europe</b>	1		1	5	7
<b>South-West Europe (SUDOE)</b>	1		4		5
<b>Western Mediterranean (MEDOCC)</b>			1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	10		13	14	37

\* No information available in the ESPON-INTERACT database on ARCHIMED, Caribbean Space and Indian Ocean/Réunion; no relevant projects in Madeira-Azores-Canaries Islands or Northern Periphery.

### 2.6.1 Structure of the territory

Striving for a more balanced settlement of structure at different levels of scale within the European Union is one of the main policy options of the ESDP. The goal in itself is not to change the urban hierarchy in the EU, but to enable (economic) development to occur in multiple nodes instead of being concentrated in a confined core area. This concentrated pattern can be witnessed at different scales. The most obvious is the strong concentration of settlements in the core area of the EU, known as the pentagon, already mentioned above. At a lower territorial scale, the strong polarisation of the development towards metropolitan areas, inside this pentagon, but also in more peripheral areas, is exerting a strong pressure on the natural and social environment.

Polycentric development has a strong spatial connotation, and consequently, it is often put into practice by INTERREG projects by focusing on the spatial structure of the territory. Indeed, INTERREG projects intend to operationalise the objective of balanced structure of the territory by acting on distinct levels, ranging from the integration of large transnational entities to the improvement of the bal-

ance of settlements at the metropolitan or regional scale. Interestingly, while many projects are focusing on more than one territorial scale (micro, meso or macro), no one seems to propose an integrated path from the local to the European level. This would involve a range of actors difficult to integrate into one single project.

#### Macro scale

Providing a counterweight to the concentration in the central part of Europe (either pentagon or Blue Banana) is the main challenge at the macro or European scale. The *SIC!* project, in the CADSES area, is taking up the challenge and aims at reinforcing the coherence of a large transnational area, going from Berlin to Venice, articulated around major metropolises and overall providing an alternative to the Blue Banana, in order to spatially 'deconcentrate' characteristics of Europe.

### **SIC! (IIIB CADSES)**

The SIC! area corresponds to the region along the so called Pan-European Corridor IV, following the capitals Berlin – Prague – Vienna – Bratislava. Its objective is to foster the development of a spatial integrated zone, like the 'Blue Banana', and to position the area's regions strategically within the enlarged EU. The project is especially focusing on the improvement of transnational accessibility by linking the area's agglomerations.

[www.sustrain-ic.net](http://www.sustrain-ic.net)

### **Meso scale**

On the meso level INTERREG projects focus on the realisation of spatially integrated zones, mostly articulated around major metropolises or gateways. Transport infrastructure improvements occupy a major role in these projects. Projects such as *Via Baltica Nordica*, *COINCO* and *HST-Connect*, although focusing on different parts of Europe, are all based on the hypothesis that a coherent transnational cooperation is essential for improving internal physical accessibility and connectivity. Enabling the economic and social agents of an area to interact more easily is seen as a prerequisite in order to facilitate the emergence of an economically integrated, more cohesive and more significant area.

Outside the main metropolitan areas, the application of polycentricity is often directed at strengthening the position of medium-sized towns, in a pattern of 'deconcentrated concentration'. Enabling a concentration of activities and settlements in a polycentric system of 'compact cities' is considered as highly relevant in such areas. The project *REPUS* aims to increase the awareness of the potential of medium-sized towns and to develop strategies directed at a Regional Polycentric Urban System in Eastern Europe. The project thus focuses on the potential spatial dynamics that medium-sized can have at the meso scale.

### **Via Baltica Nordica (IIIB Baltic Sea Region)**

The Via Baltica has been partly set up along the Pan-European corridor that links Finland to the CEEC. The project is intending to 'contribute to a more polycentric spatial development'. The idea of the project is to develop the Via Baltica road/rail connection but also to enable its regions to develop by transnational cooperation.

'Via Baltica Nordica cooperation contributes to the Northern Dimension Action Plan at least on the priority sectors of infrastructure, environment and cross-border cooperation.'

[www.viabalticanordica.de](http://www.viabalticanordica.de)

### Micro scale

Although projects focussing on higher levels of scale can be identified in fact the majority of projects dealing with the spatial dimension of polycentric development are focusing on the intra-regional or metropolitan (micro) scale. As described in the section dedicated to the general debate around the notion of polycentricity, the ideal of the polycentric city region has gained momentum. Although the economic and environmental benefits of polycentric urban regions are not proven so far, it still has a strongly appealing interest for the actors at the regional and local scale, as a political project for the development of the region. Examples are *Baltic Palette II*, *Metropolitan Areas+* and *RIMED*, the latter project focussing on the containment of urban sprawl. The main strategy of these projects is to stimulate the development of secondary nodes as potential development alternatives to the central areas.

The project *POLYNET*, also focusing on polycentric regional entities, has a different focus as it is mainly a research project whereas the other three projects are more policy oriented. *POLYNET*, which focuses on functional polycentricity within the mega-city regions of north-west Europe, emphasises that of polycentricity is not only related to urban centres to their inter-linkages.

Projects on the micro level not only deal with (large) metropolitan areas. There are also project focussing on medium-sized cities in less densely populated areas. For instance

*Vital Cities* advocates that activities need to be re-concentrated in the inner parts of peripheral nodes. It stresses that non-metropolitan regions have the potential to contribute to polycentric development by concentrating efforts around some nodal points that in this way could become 'regional gateways', particularly relevant when intending to articulate polycentricity on a trans-regional (meso) perspective.

INTERREG IIIA projects also provide an interesting input concerning the application of polycentricity at the micro scale thanks to their cross-border nature. Relevant projects in cross-border areas aim to improve the functional and spatial integration of the region. For instance, the project *Öresund-Bo* (Malmö-Copenhagen) focuses on the improvement of the living conditions meaning an improved distribution of settlements, especially in the outer parts of the region. In the Pamina region a project is targeting the development of a joint public transportation network by improving the integration of the already existing networks, and thus creating a common network able to foster increased transportation of goods and persons over the border. In the same manner the project *SITRALP* in the Alcotra region (Italy-France) region examines the possibility to integrate the transportation systems in the Savoy and the Aosta Valley. The INTERREG IIIA projects reviewed in this section aim at overcoming natural (sea, mountain) and administrative barriers currently forming an obstacle for the spatial and functional integration of the region, essentially by joining the existing traffic systems.

#### **ÖresundBo: Living possibilities in the Øresund Region (Malmö-Copenhagen Region, IIIA)**

The purpose of the project is to contribute to a more integrated and well-functioning region by encouraging a positive increase in population in the outer areas of the region. The project wants to make it more attractive to live outside the main cities in the region by showing, amongst others, some of the positive sides of living in less populated areas. The project is a cooperation with a number of municipalities in the region. By strengthening their cooperation and exchanging ideas and experiences the project hopes to achieve better marketing tools, better planning instruments and increased competence among the employees in the municipalities. The project will start a number of local projects to test some of the ideas and new marketing strategies.

[www.oresundbo.se](http://www.oresundbo.se)

## Summary

INTERREG projects focussing on matters of spatial structure are addressing the issue of a more polycentric organisation of the territory by different angles. Key objectives range from the development of spatially integrated areas to the improvement of the position of small and medium-sized towns in peripheral areas. All projects show a strongly felt

need throughout Europe to re-structure the territory, often perceived as fragmented or at least not sufficiently balanced. Table 5 illustrates the main features of the spatial dynamics addressed by all these projects which seek to bring about a polycentric urban structure in Europe at different territorial scales.

**Table 5** Examples of projects related to the structure of the territory

	Micro	Meso	Macro
<b>Structure of the territory</b>	<p>Polycentric regional structure (Metropolitan Areas+)</p> <p>Compact city structure in peripheral nodes (Vital Cities)</p> <p>Integration of settlement and transport systems (Öresund Bo, SITRALP)</p>	<p>Spatial integration of trans-national zones (Via Baltica)</p> <p>System of medium-sized towns (REPUS)</p>	<p>Counterweight to core parts of Europe (Blue banana) (SIC!)</p>

### 2.6.2 Potentials for balanced economic development

At the European scale, the high concentration of economic activities in the central parts of Europe, designated by many as the pentagon, is causing large disparities of wealth across the continent, which is often pictured as a core-periphery dichotomy. However, this unbalanced distribution of economic activities perceived at the European scale (macro scale) can also be witnessed at lower territorial levels.

Indeed, metropolises in peripheral areas are often concentrating the major economic activities of these regions, and thus act as a magnet for its area's resources, attracting companies and people, and fostering the metropolisation of these areas. This phenomenon in turn is causing great disparities and thus creating a core-periphery problem at an intermediary (meso) scale.

Finally, at the regional or metropolitan level (micro), the high concentration of economic activities in its central parts is having strong territorial impacts, as it significantly increases

the pressure on land and putting under pressure regional public services.

At these different territorial scales, the main objective is thus to promote a more balanced economic development, a better territorial distribution of economic activities over a territory. This can be directly linked to the notion of polycentricity as the aim is for the creation of alternative poles of growth, enabling a deconcentration of the economic activities towards other (often under-developed) parts of the territory.

#### Macro scale

In a European-wide perspective, it seems that the main economic objective linked to polycentricity is the development of Global Integration Zones that would be able to act as an alternative to the pentagon. In INTERREG projects, economic integration at the macro scale is often tightly linked to the process of spatial integration, the latter being the instrument to achieve the former. Projects such as *PolyMETREX*, *Baltic Palette*, *SDEA*, *RIMED* and *SIC!* all

partly interpret the goal of polycentricity in terms of enhanced inter-connections between participating metropolitan regions. The *SIC!* project is a good example as the project advocates a spatially integrated region capable to compete with the 'Blue Banana'. The projects *COINCO* and *Baltic Palette II* are addressing this concern by intending to strengthen the relationships between the economic agents, with the aim to improve the economic integration of the area, and to position the whole region as an integrated economic entity at the macro level. The *COINCO* project, addressing northern Germany and southern Scandinavia, is also aiming at giving more credibility to this region to act as a united actor at the European scale.

The already mentioned *Baltic Palette* project aims at increasing the integration of the five metropolitan areas involved (Stockholm, Helsinki, Riga, Tallinn and St Petersburg) in order to create a strong European economic region able to compete with the European core. The project *C2M* gathers several metropolises from south Europa. The goal of the cooperation is to strengthen the Mediterranean economic system and to increase its competitiveness in Europe and foster the development of a Western Mediterranean Zone of Global Integration. In a different manner, the project *ATI* focuses on the position of medium-sized cities in global economic processes, and suggesting the development of a lasting cooperation between them as the potential alternative for them to be part of these global developments.

The concern to be connected to global markets is also behind the project *North East Cargo Link (NECL)*. *NECL* is focusing on improving the connectivity of the mid-Nordic regions to both the natural resources available in Russia and to the global markets of North America and Europe (mainly UK) via international seaports in Norway. In this project the issue of global economic integration is not defined in terms of the competitive position of the mid-Nordic regions vis-à-vis the pentagon area, but in terms of endogenous characteristics like the accessibility of the Nordic heavy manufacturing industries to both large natural resources regions and potential markets.

At the macro scale, fostering a more polycentric economic approach could also be related to the need to remove barriers hindering trade and integrated economic development. On that matter, projects such as *RIMED* and *CIUMED* identify the areas they deal with as being traditionally fragmented and peripheral, and consider that the development of more integrated zones is best done by striving for a polycentric transnational system of cities. In the next chapter the *CIUMED* project is also selected because it is partly oriented to improve rural-urban relationships. This is a clear indication that INTERREG projects often have several key ambitions, making the task of classifying them rather challenging.

### **PolyMETREXPlus (IIIC South, Lead Partner Barcelona)**

The project is proposing to develop the key strategic policy options of the ESDP of Global Integration Zones, Polycentricity and Complementarity, applied to the metropolitan level. The overall objective is to contribute to effective polycentric relationships, based on complementarity and cooperation between metropolitan areas. The outputs will serve as a basis to promote a polycentric metropolitan Europe.

'A polycentric approach allows individual metropolitan regions and areas to consider their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (the SWOT approach) in a wider context. It provides an opportunity to address these issues collectively.' (PolyMETREXPlus Interim report)

[www.eurometrex.org](http://www.eurometrex.org)

### Meso scale

At the meso scale projects dealing with balanced economic development aim to stimulate economic complementarities between cities and to foster the development of innovation networks. *TECNOMAN* emphasises the need for the individual regions to sharpen their economic profile in order to increase their potential role in the larger network. Likewise, by focusing on the sector of the knowledge technology, *TECPARKNET* aims at positioning the EU-Future Region in southern Europe as an economically integrated European region.

Building networks of cities with complementary profiles is not the only application of the polycentricity concept to be found at the meso scale. Indeed, cities in networks also need to find a common economic interest in order to have a meaningful basis for their collaboration. Innovation is perceived in many INTERREG projects as the most relevant subject for developing a joint economic development strategy. Innovation should not only be interpreted as the development of new technological solutions and products, but

also as a way to adapt to changing economic contexts. Collaborating on innovation issues enables regions to increase spill-over effects between regions and to reduce their overall vulnerability to economic changes. Projects such as *REVITAE*, *CINCO*, *BALTMET*, *COINCO*, *TECPARKNET*, *NENSI* and *ATI* are advocating the development of such networks of innovation.

In other, maybe more traditional, industries, collaboration between economic agents with similar specialisation can be a way of avoiding direct competition and to enable them to adapt to the needs of the markets by creating a 'coalition of interest'. The projects *MNAA* and *ENLoCC* are precisely intending to form such networks of centres of competence in respectively materials and logistics. These networks enable the individual centres to be competitive in a European and global perspective, which is considered an impossible task without cooperation. The reinforcement of networks of centres of excellence is an indication that a greater coherence in transnational zones is seen as a precondition for economic development.

#### JORDES+ (IIIA Austria – Slovakia – Hungary)

The geographical situation of the JORDES region is unique in Europe and holds large development opportunities. Close together live about 4 million people in three countries, which until now hardly have cooperated. The entry of Slovakia and Hungary to the European Union, preceded by cooperation on government level, circulations of important technologies as well as the programmes INTERREG IIIA and PHARE CBC, gave birth to the development of the JORDES idea. By purposeful acting in the region it can be converted to a growth pool of European importance. JORDES+ is to make two substantial contributions to this: to set the change process in course and to protect the public interests.

JORDES+ aims at setting up a common development strategy for the region Vienna - Bratislava - Gyoer. At completion the project aims at having produced substantial components for the development of a regional planning and project development strategy that can be coordinated and accepted between the partners and the political organs in the region. Hopefully this can lead to the development of the region into an internationally positioned growth region.

[www.jordes.org](http://www.jordes.org)

Interestingly some INTERREG IIIA projects also focus on the issue of economic development dynamics at the meso level. Indeed, the development of joint economic development strategies in certain areas targets a stronger positioning of the cross-border region in a wider transnational perspective, thus focusing on improved competitiveness of the region as a whole. An example is *Helsinki-Tallinn Science Twin City*, focusing on the joint development of specific high-tech sectors and thus strengthening the position of the Twin-City region in these sectors. Another example is *JORDES* (Austria – Slovakia – Hungary), aiming at converting the region into a growth pole of transnational importance.

### Micro scale

At the regional and metropolitan scale, the concentration of economic activities in the core creates a strong imbalance, not only by under-utilising the potentials of the outer parts of the region, but also by increasing the pressure on the central parts. In that regard, projects such as *BALTMET*, *Baltic Palette II* and *ATI* take into consideration the potential that each urban node has to stimulate economic development in its hinterland. They focus on the importance of the urban centres as the promoters of economic development to other parts of the territory, especially as regards their ability to polarise the resources for economic development, and to diffuse innovation and economic development to their hinterland. This focus is also taken by the *CIUMED* project. This project stresses the need for the larger urban areas to be capable of transmitting to their hinterland ‘the impulses of economic development’.

At the micro scale, the more regionally-focused INTERREG IIIA projects are of high interest concerning economic development, primarily targeting the improvement of the cross-border labour market by fostering a better match between the supply and demand sides, as well as improving the qualitative aspects of the labour market (training and education). The project *A cross-border labour market* in the Öresund region emphasises the possibility to provide a broader recruitment foundation for employers, an improved exploitation of the resources of the labour force as well as increased choice possibilities for employees. The *SVILMA* project (INTERREG IIIA Italy/Balkans-Adriatic region) addresses the issue of employment and seeks to create common training possibilities and eventually to create an integrated labour market.

### Summary

The effort for a more balanced distribution of growth in the EU is operationalised in INTERREG projects at different geographical scales. These projects show that there is a permanent interplay between the need for economic cohesion, i.e. reducing the disparities between the different European regions, and for improved competitiveness. In that regard, a common pattern seems that dealing with the issue of economic cohesion in an area is often linked to the necessity of improving the competitiveness of this area as a whole.

**Table 6** Examples of projects related to economic development

	Micro	Meso	Macro
<b>Economic development</b>	Develop economic profiles of regional sub-centres (Baltic Palette II)	Networks of innovation/ Competence centres (TECPARKNET)	Enhanced economic integration of metropolitan regions (PolyMETREX Plus)
	Transmit economic impuls to the metropolitan hinterland (CIUMED)	Improving the competitiveness of the region (Austria-Slovakia-Hungary)	Connection to global markets (North East Cargo Link)
	Creation of a joint labour market (SVILMA)		



### 2.6.3 New integrated governance systems and tools

This third sub-section dedicated to the analysis of the implementation of polycentric development in INTERREG projects examines projects focussing on new governance systems in order to stimulate the emergence of new centres. As emphasised earlier this new objective which came up in the European policy debate underlines the necessity to create new frameworks for action that can be linked to spatial planning and governance aspects such as empowerment and subsidiarity. Consequently, this sub-section mainly focuses on how the INTERREG projects have addressed the development of new integrated systems of governance, enabling regions and towns to further develop their capabilities and be more proactive in their own territorial development issues, with the overarching goal to become more competitive and to position themselves as credible alternatives to metropolitan 'winning' areas.

In this manner, the development of viable networks of small and medium-sized towns can be seen as central to this theme. The greater interdependencies between towns and regions in Europe makes it all the more relevant to develop new horizons for cooperation in order for them to have an active role in their future development. The development of joint development strategies emphasises polycentric development as an integrative process, necessitating a strong support and involvement from the local and regional actors.

### Micro scale

The issue of new systems of governance in general and the modernisation of planning tools in particular has been mainly tackled by INTERREG projects at the regional and local scale. Projects like *Innovation Circle*, *PolyDev* and *AMAT* emphasise the proactive role that local and regional actors have to take in regional development issues. The capacity to do so is a prime objective of these projects.

Several projects focus on the modernisation of spatial planning tools, in particular the development of spatial strategies. The INTERREG IIIC project *ESDP Steps* for instance acknowledges that the current spatial planning and urban management tools are not appropriately designed to meet the objectives of the ESDP. The development of new ways of dealing with urban management, a key objective of projects like *InterMETREX*, *URBE VIVA* and *VISP*, is made concrete through the development of comprehensive visions on the urban territory. The integration of the transport and land-use planning systems is seen as the key challenge in order to optimise the potential for development.

Next to the issue of multi-sectoral coordination at the horizontal level, several projects emphasis the need for (vertical) cooperation, for different regional and local actors to work together. The project *Town-Net* brings together regions around the North Sea having a similar pattern of small and medium-sized towns. The project takes polycentricity at the regional level as a main aim and addresses it

#### TOWN-NET (IIIB North Sea Region)

The projects main objective is to strengthen the participating regions as a whole by stimulating development of each town's stronger areas, encouraging greater cooperation between towns, cities and regions without competitive overlap and resulting in differentiation and complementation. For doing so, the project intends to focus on the optimisation of public transport and improved integration between spatial planning and transport within town-networks, as well as greater development concentration of development at transport nodes. But the project also includes other themes such as the spatial quality of the region or economic cooperation or regional identity. In that regard, TOWN-NET strives for a comprehensive approach to spatial planning.

[www.town-net.nl](http://www.town-net.nl)



from different angles (economic development, spatial quality, transportation) and consequently emphasises the necessity of a comprehensive approach (we will return to this project in the next chapter). The *SPAN* project advocates the development of participatory approaches in the cooperating regions, as well as the multi-level governance principle (this project deals with polycentricity as well as rural-urban relationships). To bring together a variety of actors is also at the heart of the projects *ALPCITY*, *VISP* and *EUROPOLIS*, enabling the local communities to be real actors of their development.

Several projects focus on the improvement of local endogenous development potentials (*NEWTASC*, *BRAIN DRAIN* and *DART*). The approach includes not just economic aspects. The *MECIBS* project for instance links the issue of revitalisation of declining industrial areas to governance capacity and the regeneration of local communities, meaning that the social links between inhabitants and the local leadership have to be reconstructed. The main objective is to increase the capacity of structurally lagging communities to adapt to changing contexts. The *ALPCITY* project has similar objectives: The regeneration of small towns is considered as crucial to bring about a polycentric urban system in the Alpine Space.

### MECIBS (IIIB Baltic Sea Region)

The INTERREG IIIB project *Medium Sized Cities in Dialogue around the Baltic Sea* (MECIBS) was carried out in the period 2002-2005 by cities and research institutions in Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Finland in cooperation with associated partners from Russia, Estonia, Latvia and Poland. Partners co-operated with the ambition of learning from each other and to develop new ideas in relation to business policy, urban planning, socio-economic restructuring and other aspects of urban restructuring. The aim was also to develop recommendations for local strategies and national and EU regional policies.

With the overall objective to foster balanced spatial development by sustaining the development of medium-sized cities, the project aims at:

- understanding urban restructuring on comparative and concrete examples;
- forming recommendations for the interplay between local and national strategies as well as on the integrated perspective on economic, environmental and social development;
- forming a network of medium-sized cities to facilitate exchange of experience and mutual learning.

[www.mecibs.dk](http://www.mecibs.dk)

### Meso scale

New governance systems can also be interpreted as the building of a 'coalition of interest' by cities with the same profiles, enabling them to position themselves, collectively, in a wider transnational perspective. The *MECIBS* and *DEFRIS* projects are good examples of such thinking. Indeed, these projects are aiming at building long lasting coalitions of interest, enabling their partners to cope with a context of strong competition with the nearest metropolitan areas.

### Summary

Projects focussing on issues of governance can be found mainly at the local and regional level. Developing joint strategies and new instruments for spatial planning is pursued in order to give local actors a greater capacity to influence the development of their region. In that sense, the empowerment and the building of renewed capacity for action of the local actors influence their ability to be proactive in the development of their territory.

**Table 7**                      **Examples of projects related to governance**

	Micro	Meso	Macro
<b>Governance</b>	Integrated spatial development instruments (PolyDev, URBE VIVA)  Promoting growth initiatives (Revitalisation) (MECIBS, REVITA)  Urban regeneration	Joint strategies for development of second-tier towns (DEFRIS, MECIBS)	

## 2.7 INTERREG projects in the light of ESPON

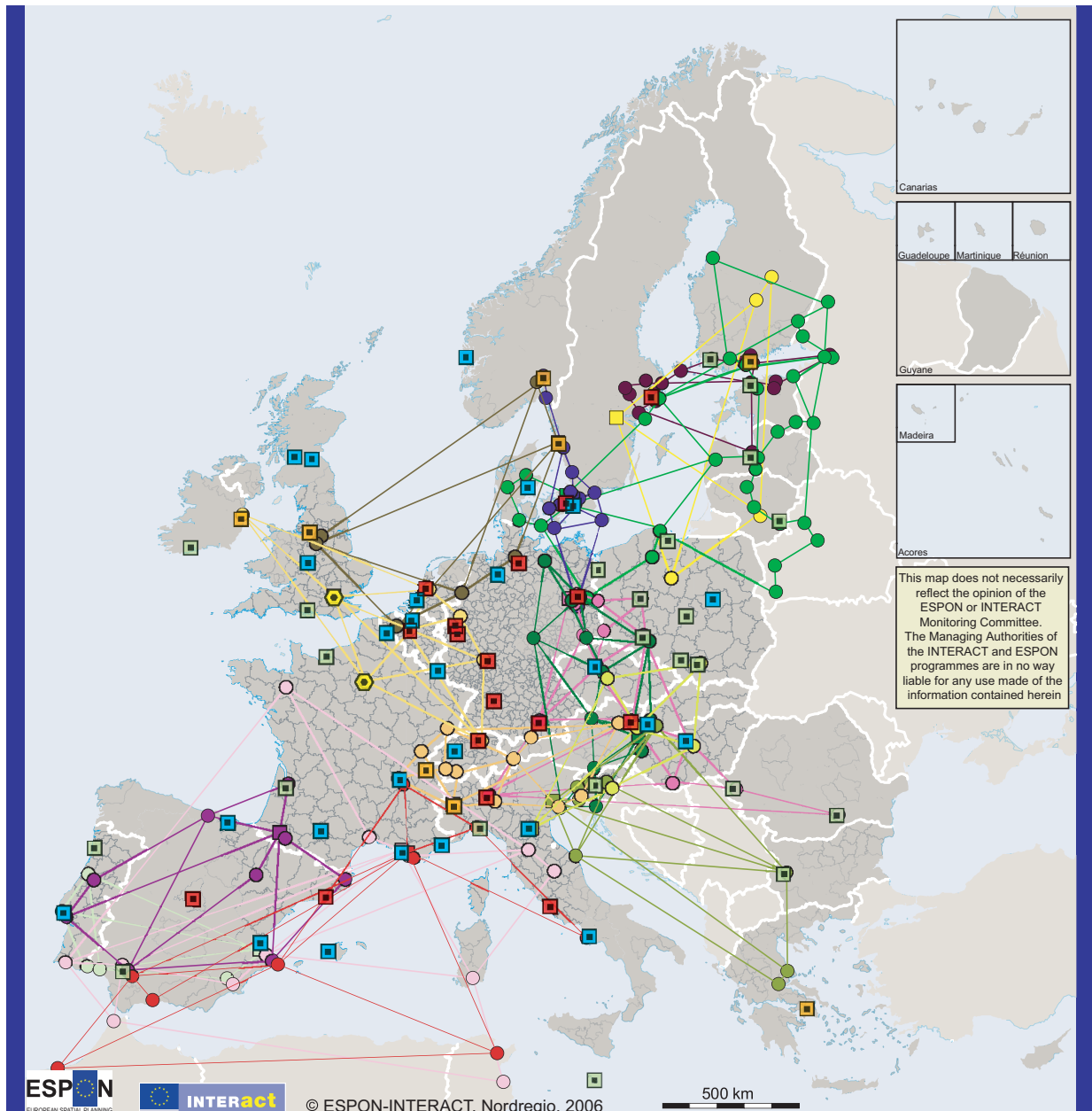
The analysis of INTERREG projects, performed in the previous sections, revealed the main ‘polycentric’ dynamics addressed by these projects. In that sense, INTERREG projects are in line with the interpretation of polycentric development made in the chapter’s introduction, i.e. focusing on local actors’ capacity to take advantage of opportunities.

Identifying the diversity of the potentials of European territories has been one of the main objectives of the ESPON programme, and in particular the ESPON 1.1.1. project, discussed earlier in this chapter. These potentials are essentially linked to the geographical context of cities. This section proposes a way of integrating the ESPON results as an input in the INTERREG perspective on polycentric development. The main aim is to examine the geographical context of some selected INTERREG projects, first by mapping its partners, and then by confronting the ‘geography’ of these projects to relevant thematic ESPON results. These illustrations might work as ‘food for thought’ on some specific questions: What kind of cooperation pattern does it show? What types of cities are collaborating with each other? How can the improved understanding of the partners’ geographical context serve the projects?

This section will be divided into two distinct analytical parts. The first part focuses on the pattern of projects illustrated in a European perspective. The second part examines regional and local contexts.

### The European context

Some patterns emerge from the overlay of main INTERREG IIIB projects dealing with polycentric development and the MEGA cities identified by ESPON 1.1.1. (Map 6). First polycentric projects only exceptionally connect MEGA cities directly with each other. The focus is rather on second tier cities. These second tier cities are however generally in proximity to a MEGA. European regions with a reduced endowment of MEGA cities tend not to participate in polycentric development projects. This may suggest that the insistence of the ESDP on the need for polycentric development in “*less densely settled and economically weaker regions*” (CEC, 1999: 21) has not lead to the emergence of significant transnational projects dealing with these issues and branded by their initiators as polycentric.



**Map 6**  
**Overlay of MEGA cities identified by ESPON 1.1.1 and main INTERREG IIIB projects dealing with polycentric development'**

© EuroGeographics Association for the administrative boundaries

Source: ESPON 111 for the MEGA and cluster classifications  
 ESPON-INTERACT project database for the INTERREG projects

Classification of MEGAs:

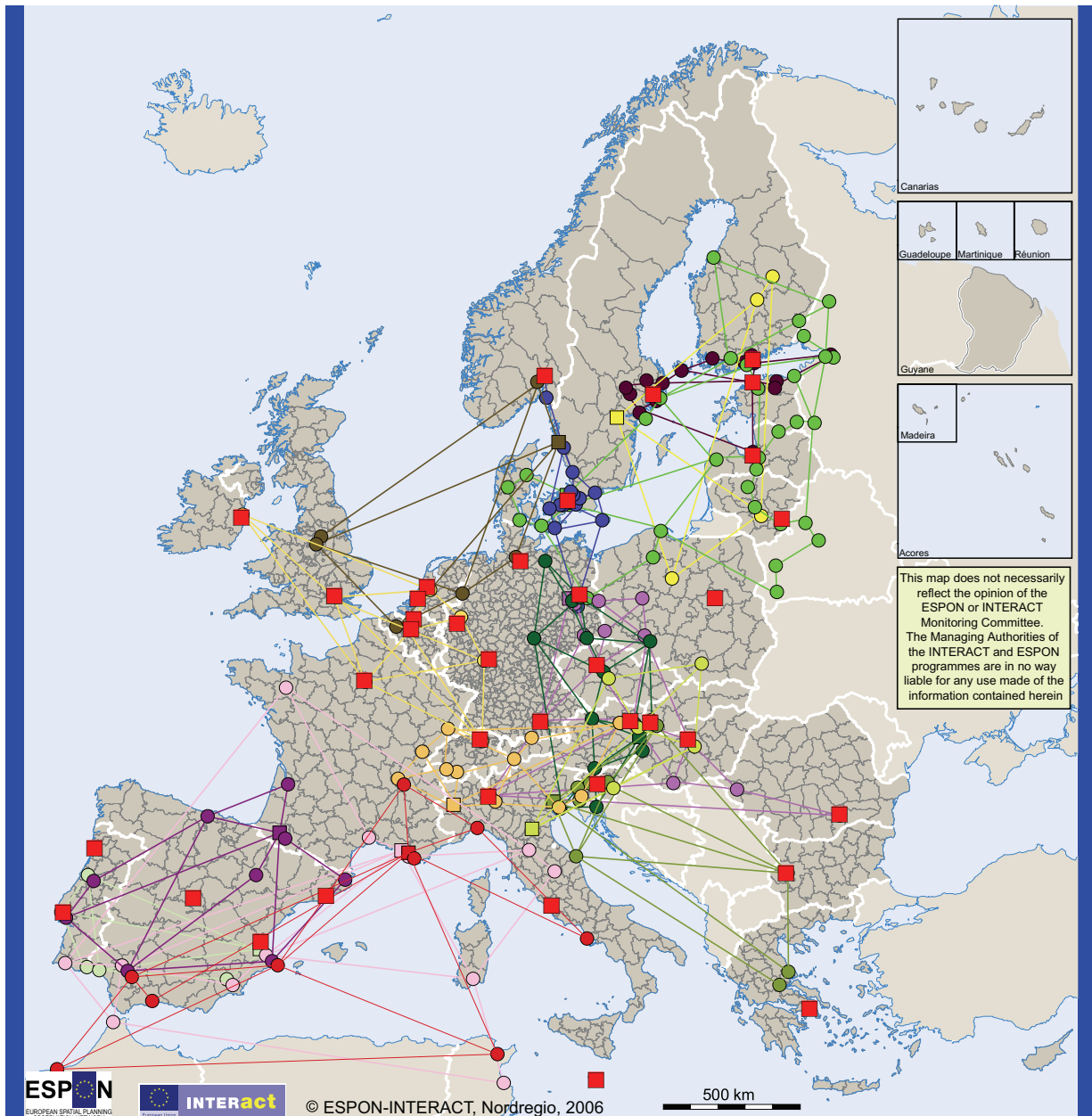
- Global node
- European engine
- Strong MEGA
- Potential MEGA
- Weak MEGA

Projects in measures linked to polycentric development:  
 Squares refer to the lead partners and circles to other partners involved in the project.

- |                   |         |              |
|-------------------|---------|--------------|
| AlpCity           | C2M     | Polynet      |
| AMAT              | COINCO  | RePus        |
| ATI               | Defris  | SIC!         |
| Baltic Palette II | MECIBS  | VISP         |
| CIUMED            | PolyDev | Vital Cities |

Second INTERREG projects tend to connect cities in close proximity of either high category MEGAs ('strong MEGAs', 'European engines' and 'Global nodes') or low category ones ('weak' or "potential MEGAs) but seldom connect dynamic and lagging areas. This seems to indicate that economically strong areas have tended to join forces through INTERREG, rather than seeking to line up with weaker ones. There are however, some significant exceptions, such as for example the *MECIBS* project in the Baltic Sea Region area connecting Nordic, Baltic, Polish and German cities.

The overlay of these same INTERREG projects with the two first categories of FUAs identified in the typology in section 2.2 discloses some other patterns (Maps 7 and 8). While the spatial distribution of participating cities is markedly different from that of first tier nodal regions and capital cities, it follows that of second tier nodal regions more closely. This is well in line with the general assumption that polycentric thinking needs to focus on the second tier of cities as a first element of promoting a more balanced urban network.



**Map 7**  
**Overlay of first tier nodal regions and capital cities identified by ESPON 1.1.1 and main INTERREG IIB projects dealing with polycentric development**

© EuroGeographics Association for the administrative boundaries

Source: ESPON 111 for the MEGA and cluster classifications  
 ESPON-INTERACT project database for the INTERREG projects

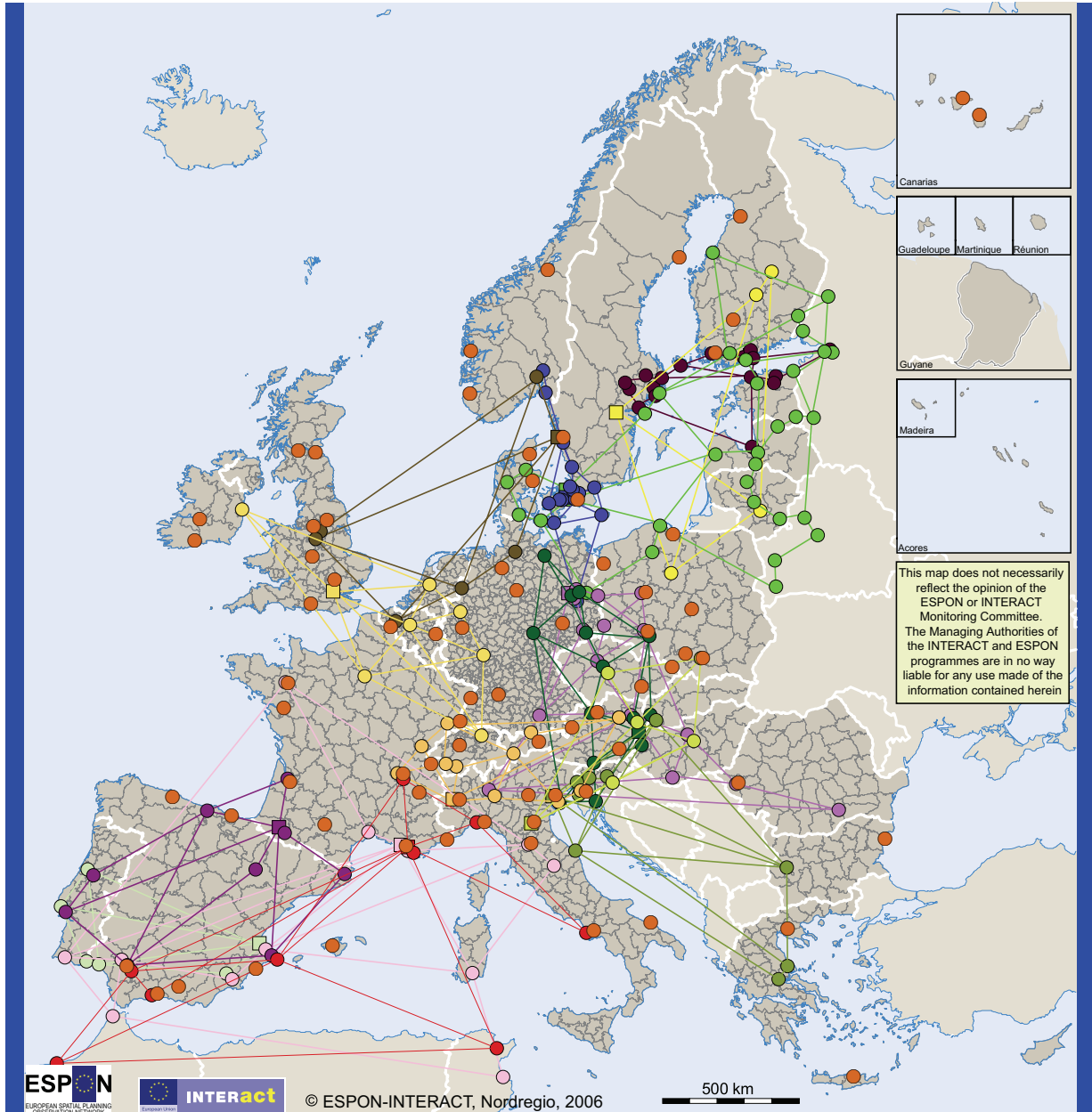
Type of cluster:

■ First tier nodal regions and capital cities

Projects in measures linked to polycentric development:

Squares refer to the lead partners and circles to other partners involved in the project.

- |                     |           |                |
|---------------------|-----------|----------------|
| ○ AlpCity           | ■ C2M     | ○ Polynet      |
| ○ AMAT              | ■ COINCO  | ○ RePus        |
| ○ ATI               | ○ Defris  | ■ SIC!         |
| ■ Baltic Palette II | ■ MECIBS  | ■ VISP         |
| ○ CIUMED            | ○ PolyDev | ○ Vital Cities |



**Map 8**  
**Overlay of second tier nodal regions cities identified by ESPON 1.1.1 and main INTERREG IIB projects dealing with polycentric development**

© EuroGeographics Association for the administrative boundaries

Source: ESPON 111 for the MEGA and cluster classifications  
 ESPON-INTERACT project database for the INTERREG projects

Type of cluster:

● Second tier nodal regions

Projects in measures linked to polycentric development:

Squares refer to the lead partners and circles to other partners involved in the project.

- |                     |           |                |
|---------------------|-----------|----------------|
| ■ AlpCity           | ■ C2M     | ■ Polynet      |
| ■ AMAT              | ■ COINCO  | ■ RePus        |
| ■ ATI               | ■ Defris  | ■ SIC!         |
| ■ Baltic Palette II | ■ MECIBS  | ■ VISP         |
| ■ CIUMED            | ■ PolyDev | ■ Vital Cities |



Overall, except perhaps for the Baltic Palette, INTERREG projects generally do not contribute to the constitution of alternative Global Integration Zones outside the pentagon, despite this being a main objective of the ESDP. The focus is rather on sharing experience among cities with a similar position in the regional urban hierarchy or sharing a similar physical context (e.g. *Alpcity*). The lack of projects dealing with the integrated joint development of MEGA cities within an INTERREG programme area can be seen as a symptom of the lack of motivation in these cities for departing from an essentially competitive stance. There may be need for further research to identify to what extent this attitude can hamper the improvement of economic performance, and to pinpoint arenas in which cooperation between dynamic city regions could offer a favourable alternative to competition for all partners.

### The regional context

As noted above, few INTERREG projects dealing with polycentricity seek to promote a new Global Integration Zone within their INTERREG programme area. The focus is rather on cooperation between cities sharing the same geographical preconditions, for example the proximity to a first-tier city or MEGA. For this reason, the main potential contributions of ESPON 1.1.1 to the further development and improvement of polycentric INTERREG projects are to be found at the regional scale.

The *DEFRIS* project (INTERREG IIIB, Baltic Sea Region) offers an example of how insights provided by ESPON 1.1.1 can be used in a cooperation project. *DEFRIS* seeks to develop strategies for participating regions within the area of influence of metropolitan regions, and for those outside the area of influence strategies of enhanced cooperation in networks.

The previously described mapping of PUSH and PIA (see section 2.2) by ESPON 1.1.1 enables us to specify the geographical context of these *DEFRIS* regions.<sup>2</sup> As shown by Map 9 these regions all comprise major functional agglomerations (with at least 100 000 inhabitants within their Functional Urban Area), which are in the vicinity of the capital region. However, the functional urban areas of *DEFRIS* regions do not overlap with those of the nearby capital cities. In other words, there is no significant commuting taking place. This will probably not change in the future.

<sup>2</sup> PUSH: Potential Urban Strategic Horizons; PIA: polycentric integration area.

In terms of their potential to develop *morphological* polycentric integration, based on *proximity* between neighbouring labour markets, ESPON 1.1.1 shows that the five regions belong to two distinct groups. Three regions include significant Polycentric Integration Areas (PIA):

**Kaunas regions:** The Kaunas-Marijampole corresponds to the only PIA identified in Lithuania.

**Östsam:** Norrköping-Linköping is one of the two PIAs around Stockholm, together with Västerås-Köping.

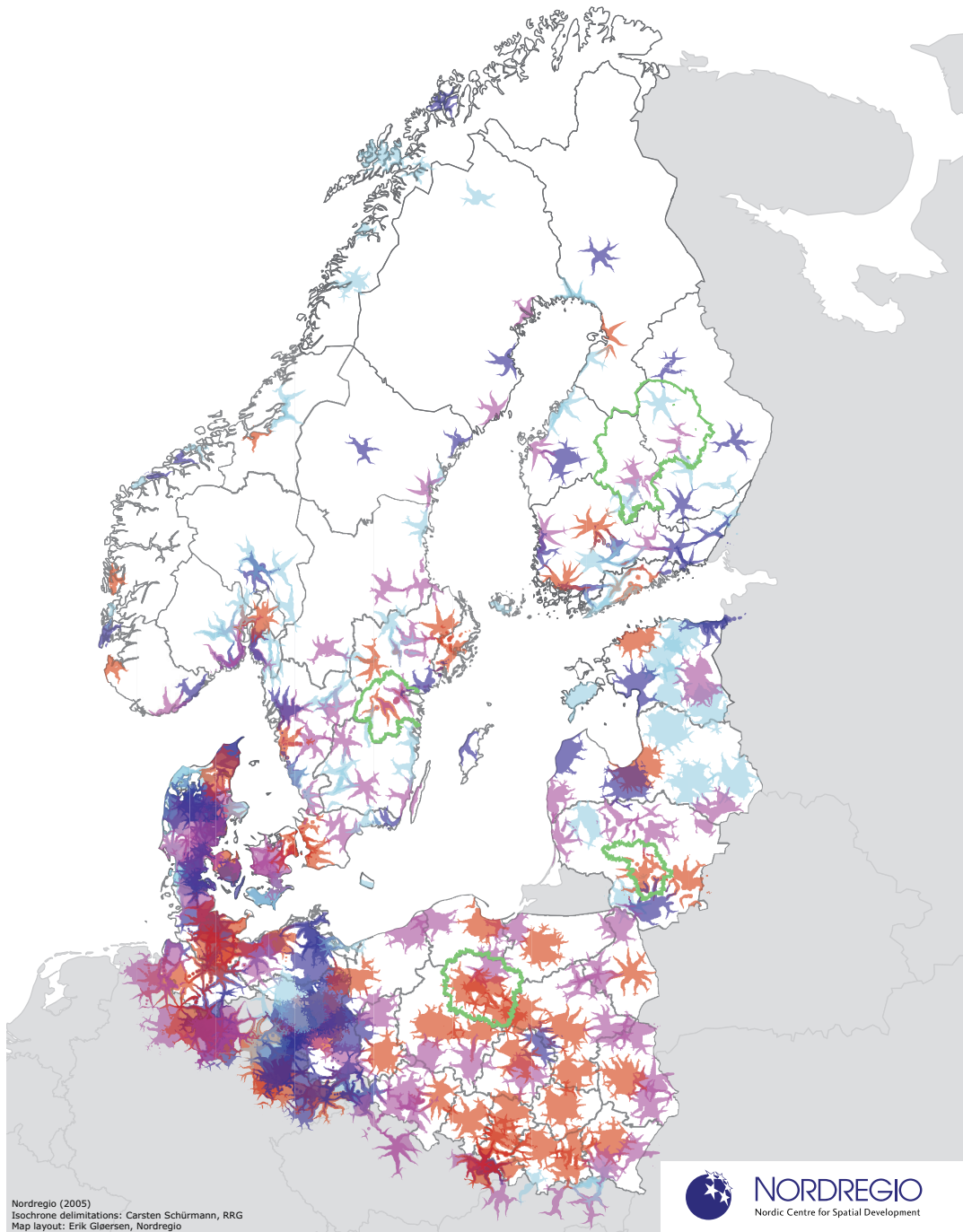
**Kujawsko-Pomorskie region:** While the Bydgoszcz-Torun PIA is almost entirely within the region, a second PIA (Wloclawek-Plock) is halfway between Kujowska-Pomorskie and the capital city region (Mazowieckie).

The two Finnish *DEFRIS* regions (Keski Suomi and Pohjois Savo) however have no PIAs, as distances between the major centres are too wide. This implies that these regions need to focus on a relational type of polycentric development perspectives, which are not based on proximity and shared potential commuting areas.

One of the objectives of polycentric integration is to reach a higher demographic mass in order to have a wider, more differentiated and better functioning labour market. The demographic masses that can potentially be reached through morphologic polycentric integration in the three former regions listed above are however quite different. While the Kujawsko-Pomorskie and Kaunas region PIAs reach or approach one million inhabitants, the Östsam PIA in Sweden is less than half that size.

However, across all *DEFRIS* regions, considerable gains in demographic potential can be observed, when comparing the current labour market and the population that can be reached within 45 minutes from the city centre (i.e. within the PUSH area). This shows that traditional, mutually exclusive labour market areas give a rather poor approximation of the actual population within which the companies of each city can recruit persons with the expertise needed for their development strategy, especially in densely populated regions.





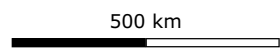
**Map 9**  
**Overlay of PUSH areas and the five INTERREG IIIB DEFRIS regions**

Population in the functional urban area of the isochrone centre.

- over 200 000 inh.
- 100 000 - 200 000 inh.
- 50 000 - 100 000 inh.
- less than 50 000 inh.

Darker colours correspond to isochrone overlaps.

- BSR regions within the ESPON study area
- DEFRIS First Division regions
- Other regions

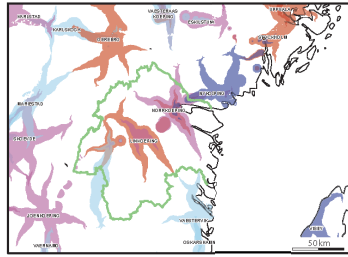


Generally, the example of the *DEFRIS* regions shows some possible concrete contributions of ESPON to an improved dialogue between partners of an INTERREG project dealing with polycentric development. The information provided will be easily recognisable by each partner when it comes to the own region. ESPON provides a research method which can be used in all areas participating in an parts INTERREG project.

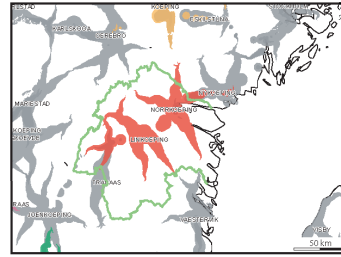
The delimitation of potential labour market areas, such as

that created by ESPON 1.1.1, can contribute to a more specific understanding of regional development issues. The scientific tools developed by ESPON (FUAs, PIAs, MEGAs, PUSH) to describe the polycentric potentials across Europe can provide an interesting source of information for the partners involved in INTERREG projects, especially the regional and local policy-makers. On the other hand, the feedbacks coming from the INTERREG partners to the ESPON researchers provide a better insight on the mechanisms of cooperation at stake.

**Östsam region**

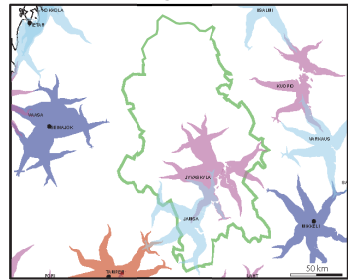


Isochrone areas  
(overlaps in darker colours)

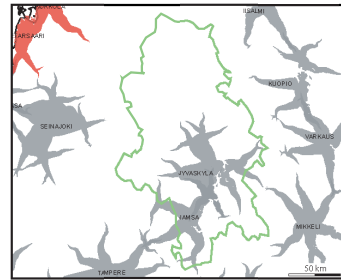


Polycentric integration areas  
(isolated isochrones in grey)

**Keski Suomi region**

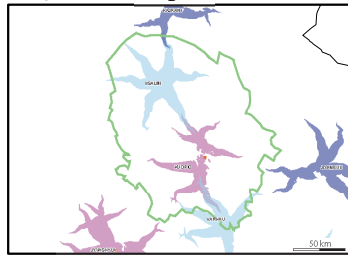


Isochrone areas  
(overlaps in darker colours)



Polycentric integration areas  
(isolated isochrones in grey)

**Pohjois Savo region**



Isochrone areas  
(overlaps in darker colours)

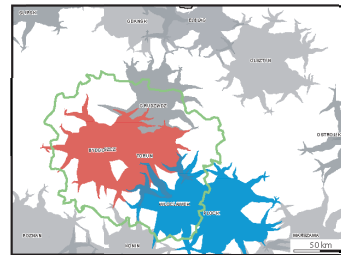


Polycentric integration areas  
(isolated isochrones in grey)

**Kujawsko Pomorskie region**

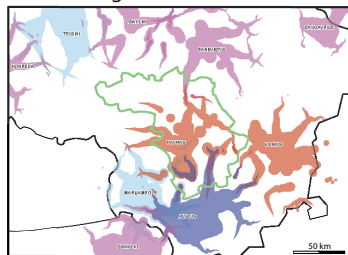


Isochrone areas  
(overlaps in darker colours)

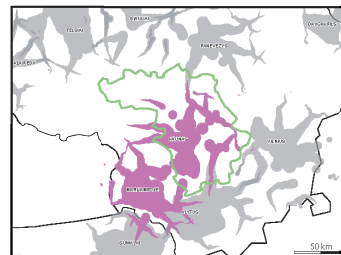


Polycentric integration areas  
(isolated isochrones in grey)

**Kaunas region**



Isochrone areas  
(overlaps in darker colours)



Polycentric integration areas  
(isolated isochrones in grey)

**Map 10  
PUSH and PIA in DEFRIS regions**

## 2.8 Conclusions

The complexity of the notion of polycentricity is mainly the result of contradictions between polycentric development strategies developed at different scales. It is a fundamentally political decision to find a balance between the imperatives between polycentric development at the European scale (i.e. developing multiple Global Integration Zones), at the regional scale (i.e. promoting a better balance between first and second tier cities) and at the intra-urban scale (i.e. structuring the urban space around well defined nodes). In the absence of top-down political decisions, these different imperatives confront each other through the interplay between actors at different levels. Economic structures and institutional arrangements largely determine the resulting territorial trends.

The analysis of the INTERREG projects dealing with polycentric development shows an enormous variety in the way the concept of polycentricity can be applied. The analysis also shows the multitude of possible dynamics that can be initiated by the regional and local actors in order to contribute to the overarching goal of polycentricity in Europe. INTERREG projects help us understand that there is no one-size-fits-all way of applying the concept, because it is strongly connected to the spatial, economic and governance-related preconditions in each region.

In this manner, if the goal seems to be similar for each project, that is to say how to make new centres emerge in Europe, the leverages used are also different. These leverages have been described in the previous section when constructing our typology. The completed matrix below aims at showing the diversity of 'polycentric' dynamics developed in INTERREG projects.

However, the review of INTERREG projects based on a cross analysis of themes (spatial structure, economic development and governance) and scales (macro, meso and micro) has shown certain constants in the relations between different levels of scales (see Table 8). Typically,

projects dealing with spatial structure will tend to focus on attempts to solve the contradictions between the macro and the micro scale, and using metropolises as their main object of reference. Consequently, the balanced spatial development of metropolises in polycentric urban systems is believed to increase their capacity to become more integrated on the European scale. The development of centres of excellence, often in medium-sized towns, is increasing the economic cohesion of the European territory by 'decentralising' economic competitiveness outside the metropolitan areas. Moreover, these growth poles are also often acting as 'regional gateways', essential for supporting the endogenous development of its surrounding communities. For these often small communities, the emphasis is put on the revitalisation and regeneration of the policy tools at their disposal, enabling them to adapt to the changing political and economic contexts.

Comparing INTERREG projects with important ESPON results shows that polycentric projects only exceptionally connect the largest cities in Europe, the MEGA cities (MEGA: Metropolitan European Growth Areas). The focus is rather on second tier cities. These second tier cities are however generally in proximity to a MEGA. European regions with a reduced endowment of MEGA cities tend not to participate in polycentric development projects. This may suggest that the insistence of the ESDP on the need for polycentric development in less densely settled and economically weaker regions has not lead to the emergence of significant transnational projects dealing with these issues and branding themselves as polycentric.

Secondly, the polycentric development patterns tend to connect cities in close proximity of either high category MEGAs ('strong MEGAs', 'European engines' and 'Global nodes') or low category ones ('weak' or 'potential' MEGAs), but more seldom connect dynamic and lagging areas. This seems to indicate that economically strong areas have tended to join forces through INTERREG, rather than seeking to connect with weaker ones.

**Table 8**                      **Grid analysis of main project themes on polycentric development**

	Micro	Meso	Macro
<b>Structure of the territory</b>	Polycentric regional structure (Metropolitan Areas+)  Compact city structure in peripheral nodes (Vital Cities)  Integration of settlement and transport systems (Öresund Bo, SITRALP)	Spatial integration of trans-national zones (Via Baltica)  System of medium-sized towns (REPUS)	Counterweight to core parts of Europe (Blue banana) (SIC!)
<b>Economic development</b>	Develop economic profiles of regional sub-centres (Baltic Palette II)  Transmit economic impuls to the metropolitan hinterland (CIUMED)  Creation of a joint labour market (SVILMA/Italy-Adriatic)	Networks of innovation/ Competence centres (TECPARKNET)  Improving the competitiveness of the region (Austria-Slovakia-Hungary)	Enhanced economic integration of metropolitan regions (PolyMETREX Plus)  Connection to global markets (North East Cargo Link)
<b>Governance</b>	Integrated spatial development instruments (PolyDev, URBE VIVA)  Promoting growth initiatives (Revitalisation) (MECIBS, REVITA)  Urban regeneration	Joint strategies for development of second-tier towns (DEFRIS, MECIBS)	

Overall INTERREG projects generally do not contribute to the constitution of alternative Global Integration Zones outside of the pentagon, despite this being a main objective for territorial policies in the ESDP. The focus is rather on sharing experience among cities with a similar position in the regional urban hierarchy, or a similar physical context

(e.g. Alpcity). The lack of projects dealing with the integrated joint development of MEGA cities within an INTERREG programme area can be seen as a symptom of the lack of motivation in these cities for departing from an essentially competitive stance.

## 3 Rural-urban relationships

### 3.1 An outline of the general debate

Over the past years we have seen a growing awareness in policy-making, supported by research, that urban and rural areas are becoming integrated. In policy terms, the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) has been instrumental in focusing attention on urban-rural relationships and urban-rural partnership at the European, national, regional and local levels. The ESDP contains three main objectives or ‘policy guidelines’, the first of which explicitly relates to what is described as urban-rural partnerships. The background of this is formed by the recognition that in large parts of Europe the vitality of rural areas is under threat. Areas with a high population density face other problems: For instance, urban sprawl, and ecological degradation.

According to the ESDP new partnerships need to be forged. The ESDP identifies a number of policy directions (or ‘options’) specific to such urban-rural partnerships. These include:

- Maintenance of a basic supply of services and public transport in small and medium-sized towns in rural areas, particularly those in decline.
- Promotion of partnerships between towns and countryside aiming at strengthening functional regions.
- Integrating the countryside surrounding large cities in spatial development strategies for urban regions, aiming at more efficient planning of land-use, paying special attention to the quality of life in the urban surroundings.
- Promotion and support of partnership-based cooperation between small and medium-sized towns at a national and transnational level through joint projects and the mutual exchange of experience.
- Promotion of company networks between small and medium-sized enterprises in the towns and the countryside.

Table 9 summarises some of the main ways to take up these policy directions. Note that the term of *partnership* has been used here as the focus here is on cooperation across administrative and territorial boundaries.

**Table 9** Examples of rural-urban ‘partnerships’

What? Goals	How? Instruments	Why? Rationale
Providing local services and public transport.	Land-use planning, infrastructure and service provision.	Promoting accessibility and providing a socially acceptable level of services.
Improving cooperation between urban and rural authorities.	Joint planning and project implementation.	Strengthening functional regions to provide access to services and employment.
Integrated urban and rural planning.	Spatial strategies.	Improving quality of through the provision of amenities such as attractive landscapes.
Cooperation between small and medium towns.	Partnerships, joint projects, exchange of experience.	Promoting innovation, competitiveness and good governance.
Networking between enterprises in urban and rural areas.	Partnerships, joint projects, exchange of experience.	Promoting competitiveness and employment growth.

The ESDP makes a plea for partnerships between rural and urban areas. The background for such partnerships are formed by existing or potential *relationships*. Rural-urban relationships relate to *functional linkages* between urban and rural areas whilst rural-urban partnerships address the *policy side* of these relationships (Nordregio, 2000). Understanding rural-urban relationships is thus a clear precondition for identifying possible rural-urban part-

nerships. Various types of rural-urban relationships can be identified: Home-work relationships; central place relationships; network relationships i.e. the interlocking of cities and urban regions; consumption relationships; amenity relationships; infrastructure relationships; and resource relationships (Nordregio 2000). Table 10 summarises some of the key aspects of each of these types of rural-urban relationships.

**Table 10**                      **Types of rural-urban relationships**

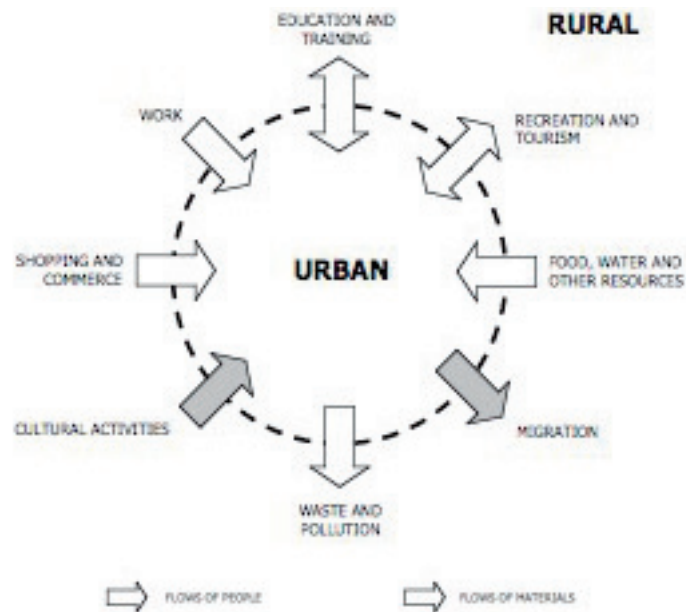
Type	Keywords/key issues
Home-work relationships	Employment, accessibility, housing, commuting, labour markets
Central place relationships	Local amenities, education, training, commerce, health, cultural facilities
Network relationships	Connections between cities through development corridors, conurbations, polycentricity
Consumption relationships	Recreation, leisure, food production, waste disposal
Amenity relationships	Landscape, open space
Infrastructure relationships	Roads, railways, telecommunication, pipeline
Resource relationships	Energy, water, aggregates

Source: Nordregio, 2000

It is thus obvious the concept of rural-urban relationships covers a broad spectrum of interactions, ranging for example from leisure and tourism to transport and communication, from labour markets and employment to food and drink, from education and training to services and facilities.

Despite this broad range of interactions, there are surprisingly few academic theories and concepts concerning rural-urban relationships as a whole (Davoudi and Stead, 2002).





Source: Stead, 2002

**Figure 6**  
**Flows of People and Materials between Urban and Rural Areas<sup>3</sup>**

Stead (2002) considers various *physical flows* between urban and rural areas in the UK, using examples of housing, employment, education, transport, tourism and resource use to help illustrate that urban and rural areas are economically, politically, socially and physically interdependent. Key physical flows between urban and rural areas are illustrated by means of a schematic figure (Figure 6) to indicate that some flows are predominantly one-way (as in the case of cultural activities or waste flows) whilst others are more two-way (as in the case of recreation and tourism). It should be stressed here however that rural-urban linkages involve a web of flows and interdependencies between urban and rural areas that is often much more complex than Figure 6 might indicate. While for instance in heavily urbanised areas there is an almost constant migration of population from cities to the countryside ('suburbanisation') there are many European areas where the opposite is happening: People leaving rural areas. Also the geographical scale of flows can vary. Certain flows are related to activities carried out by people on a daily (work, education) or a weekly basis (leisure, shopping, and cultural activities). The scale of such relationships is relatively small. This does not count for some of the other flows. Flows of materials can cross vast areas. Tourism can connect people and places over wide distances.

It is also important to stress here that links between urban and rural areas are not just physical. There are also economic links, involving monetary flows between urban and rural areas, as well as information flows. It is difficult to quantify these flows because many of them are invisible and/or unrecorded. When flows are recorded the figures are often kept classified by companies having an interest in a particular flow.

### 3.2 Key ESPON findings on rural-urban relationships

#### 3.2.1 A typology of areas

The most important ESPON project on relationships between rural and urban areas is the 1.1.2 project 'Urban-rural relations in Europe'. Main outcomes of this project concern typologies. For our discussion two typologies are of particular importance: The typology of areas and the typology of relationships. Before identifying the various types of rural-urban relations that exist, the ESPON 1.1.2 report begins by examining the various ways that urban and rural areas can be defined. The argument being that the identification and mapping of rural-urban relations is dependent on how urban and rural areas are defined. In

<sup>3</sup> A similar figure has also been used by the UK Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs in 2002 to illustrate the dependency of market towns and rural areas (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, 2002).

practice, urban and rural areas are defined in a variety of different ways across Europe: There is no single accepted definition of ‘urban’ or ‘rural’ in Europe. The definitions used are strongly influenced by the existing (territorial) context in a specific country. The majority of definitions to be found are based on criteria such as population density, population size, employment density, agricultural employment and land-use type, or a combination of these criteria.

ESPON project 1.1.2 explores a range of ways to define and distinguish between urban and rural areas using criteria such as population density, land-use type and accessibility to transport infrastructure. Ultimately the project uses a typology of urban and rural areas based on two of these criteria: Population density and land-use type. Six types of territory are distinguished using this typology (Table 11). The three types of land-use presented in the three columns of Table 11 represent the extent to which a territory is influ-

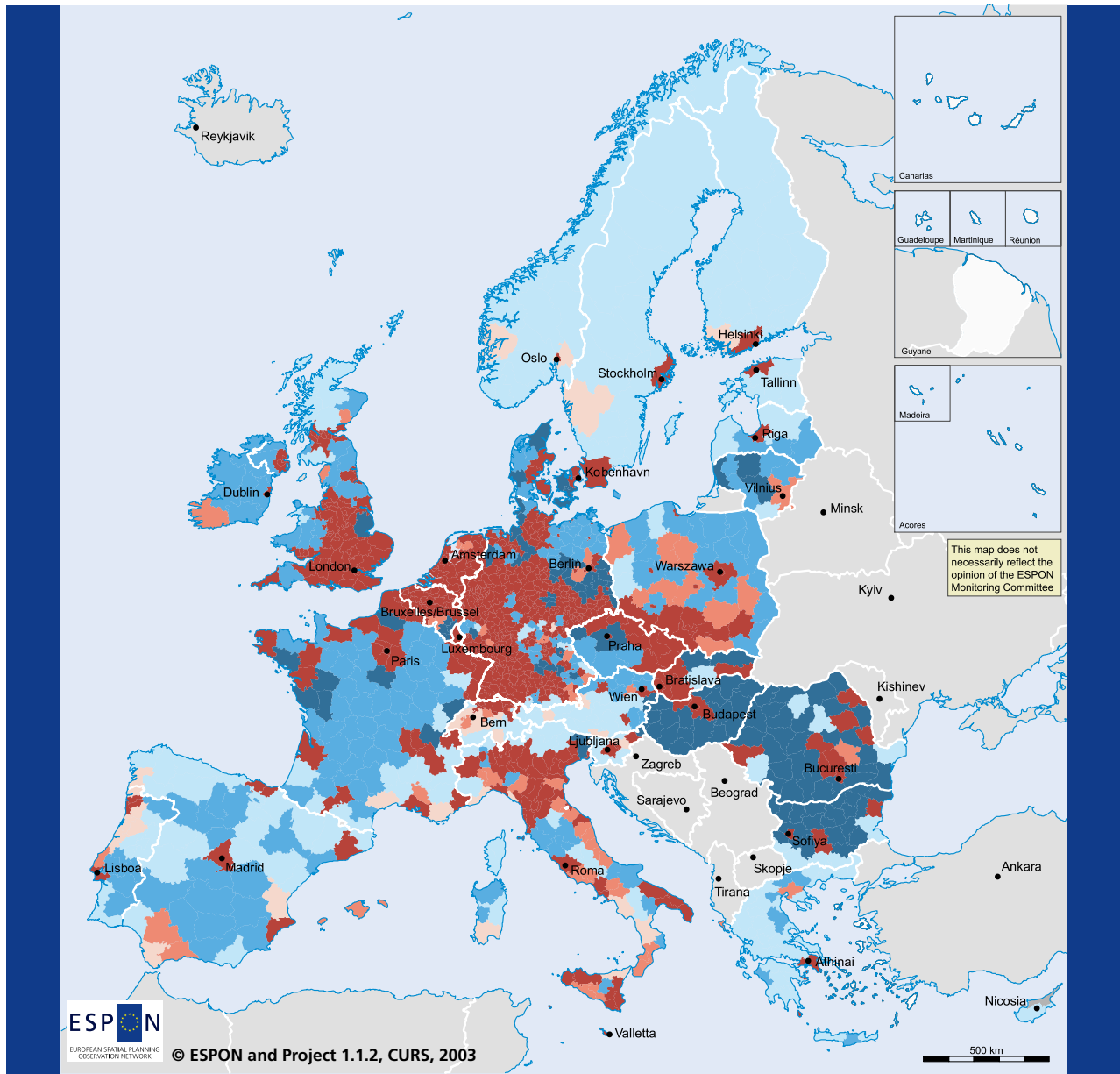
enced by human activity, ranging from high human influence (built-up) to medium human influence (cultivated) and low human influence (‘wild’). Two types of population density are distinguished (in the two rows of Table 11): Higher than average and lower than average population density. The most urban areas, according to this typology, are those that are highly influenced by human activity (built-up) and the most densely populated (Map 11). All Europe’s large metropolitan areas fall into this category. The most rural areas, according to this typology, are those that are least influenced by human activity (‘wild’) and the least densely populated. A large part of the Alpine area falls into this category, as well as much of Finland, Greece and Sweden. More intermediate rural areas can also be identified, such as relatively well-populated ‘wild’ areas (e.g. northern Portugal, south coast of France, southern Sardinia) or relatively unpopulated agricultural areas (e.g. parts of central France, central Ireland and central Spain).

**Table 11 Rural-urban typology from ESPON project 1.1.2**

		‘Rurality’		
		Built-up	Cultivated	Other (wild)
Population density	High	Metropolitan areas: London, Berlin, Madrid, Rome, Paris, Bucharest, Budapest	South-west Ireland Coastal Italy Central Poland	Northern Portugal South coast of France Southern Sardinia
	Low	Eastern Europe: Much of Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania	Central France Central Ireland Central Spain	Alpine region: Austria, Italy, Switzerland Finland Greece Sweden

ESPON project 1.1.2 examines the physical characteristics of the European territory (such as economic growth, population change and accessibility to transport infrastructure) according to this typology of urban and rural areas. A summary of the main characteristics of the six types of territory in the typology is presented in Table 12. The two most urban categories differ substantially from each other in terms of these physical characteristics. The high-density urban category (built-up, high population density) unsurprisingly has high levels of GDP per capita, it contains many of Europe’s most competitive regions (i.e. few lagging regions) and has high levels of accessibility to transport infrastructure. The low-density urban category (built-up, low population density), on the other hand, has

recently experienced population decline and low economic growth (1995-1999), it contains a high proportion of Europe’s lagging regions and has low levels of accessibility to transport infrastructure. The most rural categories also differ substantially from each other in terms of physical characteristics. One of the most striking characteristics of the high-density uncultivated category (high density, wild) is that tourism is mainly international and attracts the majority of visitors from other parts of Europe. The low-density uncultivated category (low density, wild), on the other hand, has one of the lowest levels of population growth in Europe and low levels of accessibility to transport infrastructure (especially in new EU Member States and accession countries).



**Map 11**  
**Map of rural-urban typology as developed in the ESPON project 1.1.2**

Urban-rural typology, based on population density, ranking of Functional Urban Areas and land cover.

- High urban influence, high human intervention
- High urban influence, medium human intervention
- High urban influence, low human intervention
- Low urban influence, high human intervention
- Low urban influence, medium human intervention
- Low urban influence, low human intervention
- No data

© EuroGeographics Association for the administrative boundaries

Origin of data: ESPON Project 1.1.2, CURS; CH and NO: classification on basis of calculations of ESPON Project 3.3  
 Ranking of Functional Urban Areas (FUAs): ESPON Project 1.1.1, Nordregio

Cyprus: Data for government controlled areas only

Source: ESPON Data Base

		'Rurality'		
		Built-up	Cultivated	Other (wild)
Population density	High	High-density urban	High-density agricultural	High-density uncultivated
	Low	Low-density urban	Low-density agricultural	Low-density uncultivated

**Table 12 Rural-urban typology from ESPON project 1.1.2**

	'Rurality'			
	Built-up	Cultivated	Other (wild)	
Population density	<b>High</b>	High GDP per capita Low proportion of lagging regions High levels of accessibility to transport infrastructure	Highest rate of population growth 1995-1999 Highest rate of economic growth 1995-1999 (highest in new EU Member States and accession countries) High proportion of lagging regions	Tourism dominated by non-national visitors mainly from Europe
	<b>Low</b>	Population decline 1995-1999 Lowest rate of economic growth 1995-1999 High proportion of lagging regions Low levels of accessibility to transport infrastructure (especially in new EU Member States and accession countries)	High rate of economic growth 1995-1999 (particularly in new EU Member States and accession countries) Low levels of accessibility to transport infrastructure (especially in new EU Member States and accession countries)	Low population growth 1995-1999 Low levels of accessibility to transport infrastructure (especially in new EU Member States and accession countries)

Based on: Bengs & Schmidt-Thomé, 2004

### 3.2.2 A typology of relationships

In terms of rural-urban relations, ESPON project 1.1.2 distinguishes between two types: *Structural* relations and *functional* relations.

Structural relations are determined by the way the physical environment is constituted and shaped. The pattern of built-up areas and open spaces is the clearest expression of these structural relationships. As this pattern cannot be changed over night structural relationships are characterised by a high degree of stability. On a time scale of decades structural relationships can change dramatically though as can be seen by, for instance, comparing ordinance survey maps of urban regions.

Functional relations between urban and rural areas exist because of complementarity. The expression of this is the great variety of flows discussed above. For instance the production of food in rural areas brings with it a diverse pattern of input and output flows.

Many functional relations can be changed over night, given the flexibility of the physical setting to house a multitude of various activities. Another factor is the flexibility of various functions to adapt to various physical settings.

It is by means of 'structural' and 'functional' relations that urban and rural areas are interdependent and connected economically, politically, socially and physically through issues such as housing, employment, education, transport, tourism and resource use. Some of the more physical links between urban and rural areas can be measured as has been explained above (e.g. commuting, tourism and shopping patterns). Many economic, political and social links are often invisible though and difficult to measure (e.g. monetary flows or flows of information between urban and rural areas). This lack of data and information presents a substantial challenge to understanding rural-urban relationships.

Because of the lack of detailed comprehensive data and information concerning rural-urban relationships, the use of case studies is central to ESPON project 1.1.2. Fifteen

case studies are used to explore both structural and functional rural-urban relations across Europe.<sup>4</sup> The structural relations examined include socio-economic diversification (e.g. housing, agriculture, tourism) and the interconnectedness of urban and rural areas (e.g. commuting, recreation, resource-use). The functional relations studied include various aspects concerning the profitability and protection of land. Key issues identified from the case studies include:

- Out-migration of the rural population in certain parts of Europe (mainly in southern Europe) leading to rural decline/abandonment and increased pressures on urban areas in terms of services, facilities, land, property prices, open space.
- Out-migration of the urban population in other parts of Europe (mainly in central Europe) creating pressures on rural areas in terms of services, facilities, land, property prices, accessibility.
- Declining availability of local rural services, facilities and public transport, particularly in areas of rural depopulation.
- Issues of social cohesion, including the ageing of the rural population in various parts of Europe (and their increasing isolation as a result of the declining availability of local rural services, facilities and public transport), the movement of young people away from rural areas.
- Development pressures in rural areas due to trends in leisure and recreation, shifts in agricultural practices, changes in the price of agricultural products.

All these key issues are addressed by a multitude of INTERREG projects as will be shown further on in this chapter. It will become clear then that there is on the whole a clear relationship between the type of area and the key issues of an INTERREG project. It is apparent from the examination of rural-urban relationships that the interaction between urban and rural areas is sometimes a result of inadequacies in urban or rural areas. For instance the living environment and the housing stock in urban areas might not meet the demand of people which is an inducement for suburbanisation. The lack of economic opportunities (employment) in many rural areas induces migration in the opposite direction. It is for reasons like this that not all rural-urban relationships are desirable from a social, economic or environmental perspective. Thus, in some situations, rural-urban relationships need to be managed rather than promoted. Table 13 provides a number of examples in which rural-urban interactions might be managed.

<sup>4</sup> The 15 case studies comprise Helsinki, Finland; Albi, France; Berlin, Germany; Barnim, Germany; Győr-Moson-Sopron, Hungary; County Meath, Ireland; Rome, Italy; the Randstad, Netherlands; the 'Blue City', Netherlands; Figueiro, Portugal; Algarve, Portugal; Dolenjska, Slovenia; Sant Miquel de Balenyà, Spain; Stockholm, Sweden; and Ryedale, United Kingdom.

**Table 13** Strategies for managing rural-urban interactions

Theme	Management strategies
Population and migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving preferences for urban living</li> <li>• protecting greenfield sites from development</li> <li>• encouraging the use of brownfield sites</li> <li>• tackling the isolation of less mobile rural residents</li> </ul>
Education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving education standards in urban areas</li> <li>• improving access to education and training in rural areas</li> <li>• combining provision and use of buildings for educational and other services in rural areas</li> </ul>
Recreation, tourism and cultural activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting joint marketing for main attractions</li> <li>• providing more sustainable transport services and facilities (for public transport, walking and cycling) between main attractions</li> <li>• promoting more sustainable tourism and recreation routes, not only for visitors but also for local residents</li> </ul>
Food, water and other natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting self-sufficiency in the use of resources within the region and with near neighbours</li> <li>• promoting local markets for local produce to reduce food miles</li> <li>• promoting water efficiency in homes and businesses</li> </ul>
Waste and pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting waste minimisation and recycling as ways of reducing the demands for waste disposal</li> </ul>
Shopping and commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintaining and enhancing the position of city-centre shopping areas</li> <li>• reducing the dependence on the car for out-of-town shopping</li> <li>• maintaining rural shops and commercial services</li> </ul>
Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• addressing the demand for new housing in accessible rural areas generated by new urban employment growth</li> <li>• introducing green travel plans for businesses</li> <li>• promoting sustainable transport routes for walking and cycling to work</li> </ul>

Source: Bengs & Schmidt-Thomé, 2004

### 3.3 INTERREG programmes and rural-urban relationships

In discussions on the territorial development of Europe both polycentricity and rural-urban relationships have gained prominence through the European Spatial Development Perspective. Especially INTERREG IIIB (previously INTERREG IIC) but also INTERREG IIIC can be seen as important programmes for the application of the ESDP.

A small number of INTERREG IIIA projects on rural-urban relationships can be identified from the ESPON-INTERACT database on these projects. Looking at the large number of INTERREG IIIA areas (64) and the relatively small numbers of projects explicitly focussing on rural-urban relation-

ships compared with strand INTERREG IIIB the added value of a specific analysis of IIIA operational programmes is rather limited. These programmes are not available at central locations or on the internet. Nevertheless we have selected a number of INTERREG IIIA projects from the ESPON-INTERACT database to get a flavour of their content.

The INTERREG IIIC strand differs from the A- and B-strands. The Programme Documents do not list specific thematic priorities or measures, although a number of projects have been identified which focus on certain aspects of rural-urban relationships (see below).<sup>5</sup> It is for these reasons that the INTERREG IIIB programmes are of particular interest in terms of the identification of rural-urban relationships as an important and recognised subject for cooperation.

<sup>5</sup> The INTERREG IIIC programmes differentiate between different types of operations, like network or individual projects or topics for cooperation like Objective 1 and 2 areas or community initiatives like INTERREG or URBAN. The IIIC programmes thus do not differentiate between the content matter of projects. The programmes are therefore not structured in terms of priorities and measures.



Based on the analysis carried out in the ESPON 2.3.1. project on the application of the ESDP Table 14 has been constructed. This table gives an overview of the occurrence of rural-urban relationships in INTERREG IIIB programmes and the share of the overall budget earmarked for this subject. As *priorities* are in most cases broadly formulated the focus was on *measures*.

A first conclusion to be drawn is that it is on the whole difficult to identify measures that are relevant to rural-urban relationships in some programming areas. Outspoken examples are the Atlantic Area, where the programming document just speaks in terms of ‘spatial structuring’ and Alpine Space. In the latter programme the wording of the appropriate measure is even broader compared with the Atlantic Area: Competitiveness and sustainability. Also in other cases a broad terminology has been used, like in the case of the Baltic Sea Region. In only six out of thirteen

Programme Documents there is explicit mentioning of cooperation or complementarity between urban and rural areas. In the case of the MEDOCC Programme there is no mentioning of rural-urban relationships on the level of a measure but just on the level of one of priorities.<sup>6</sup> There is however no explicit mentioning of cooperation between urban and rural zones under the only measure ‘territorial development and urban development’ (Measure 2.1) for which 15.2% of the overall ERDF budget is allocated. In the case of CADSES and Indian Ocean/Réunion there is just mentioning of rural development or rural territory.

The Programme Document for the Northern Periphery in general can serve as an example of the complex way in which policy issues identified in general discussions (section 3.1) and ESPON research (previous section) can be connected to the structure of the Programme Document (see the box).

### Northern Periphery: Rural-urban relationships in the Programme Document

Under the heading of Priority 2 (‘Strengthen sustainable economic development’) it is emphasised that in all regions there is the issue of ‘fragile rural economies’ and that it is important to develop ‘ways to commercialise rural resources either through existing companies or by setting up new ones are of special interest’. Under the heading of Measure 2.2 (‘Business innovation and development of human resources’) emphasis is put on the development of small and medium sized enterprises or SMEs. It is here that rural-urban relationships implicitly play a role (SMEs are generally located in population centres). Measure 3.1. (‘Community development’) is above all focussing on new ways of delivering private and public services in sparsely populated areas, which in itself is an issue about rural-urban relationships since the majority of these services are located in population centres. Nevertheless measure 3.2 (‘Public management and spatial planning’) is more clear and explicit about rural-urban relationships: ‘A better understanding of the interdependency of urban and rural areas and ways in which this relationship can be developed positively needs to be pursued. There are dangers that the larger centres of population will grow at the expense of surrounding rural areas’. A number of issues related to the ‘rural-urban dimension’ are relevant for all participating regions. Priority 3 is in particular related to the overall aim of securing the settlement pattern and the viability of the local communities.

<sup>6</sup> The priority is formulated as follows: Strategies of territorial development and urban systems, comprising the cooperation between cities or urban and rural zones, in favour of a sustainable polycentric development: realisation of strategic studies, interconnection of metropolitan areas and of medium dimension cities, development of the cooperation between Planning and Territorial Research Institutes.



Examination of the allocation of financial resources according to the priorities of each of the INTERREG IIIB programmes reveals that funding is generally more limited for priorities concerning the development of a balanced and polycentric urban system and rural-urban relationships when compared to priorities related to the two other ESDP policy guidelines: Securing parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge; and sustainable development, prudent management and protection of nature and cultural heritage.

Only in one case (Indian Ocean/Réunion) the relevant measure takes up more than 10% of the entire programme budget (the variance for polycentricity measures is far

greater). So a relatively small proportion of the total budget available in every programme can be used for rural-urban projects, keeping in mind as the example of the Northern Periphery Programme Document shows that these projects could also be put forward under the heading of other measures depending on the focus of the project. For instance PURE is a IIIB project in the North Sea Region falling under a measure (Measure 4.1) addressing water management: Spatial planning strategies and action plans for water catchment areas. One of the objectives of the project is on the creation of 'multifunctional, attractive urban-rural fringe zones with water'. Part of the project is therefore positioned in terms of rural-urban relationships.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See [www.purenorthsea.com](http://www.purenorthsea.com). Because this project is mainly about water management we have not included it in our selection of projects although a case can be made of conceptualising water management from the perspective of rural-urban relationships.

**Table 14 Occurrence of rural-urban relationships in INTERREG IIIB programmes**

Programme	Measure	% budget (total ERDF- budget in mecu)	Wording
<b>Alpine Space</b>	1.2	7.6 (60.6)	Competitiveness and sustainable development*
<b>ARCHIMED</b>	1.2	6.4 (79.5)	Assistance for urban centres, rural areas and growth of cooperation between them*
	1.3		Strengthening of the economic integration of island areas and sustainable management of coastal areas
	3.4		Sustainable development of tourism
<b>Atlantic Area</b>	A.1	5.9 (118.7)	Spatial Structuring of the Atlantic Area*
<b>Madeira-Azores- Canary Islands</b>	1.2	7.4 (136.0)	Social-economic development of rural areas.
	1.3		Development and territorial planning at regional and insular level, and relations between rural and urban areas.
	1.4		Cooperation in territorial planning and rural-urban between ultra-peripheral regions of the EU.
<b>Baltic Sea Region (BSR)</b>	1.1	8.7 (100.2)	Supporting joint strategies and implementation actions for larger development zones*.
<b>Caribbean Space</b>	1.5	<5.4 (12.0)	Improving cooperation between both urban and rural areas*.
<b>CADSES</b>	1.3	5.5 (153.7)	Shaping rural development.
<b>Indian Ocean/ Réunion</b>	1.1	13 (5.0)	Environment and living space.
<b>Northern Periphery</b>	3.2	8.9 (21.2)	Public management and spatial planning.
<b>North Sea</b>	1.3	8.7 (129.3)	Development and implementation of new rural-urban and inter-rural relationships, including maritime areas.
	2.1		Effective and sustainable transport in rural and urban areas, including maritime areas, and in new rural urban connections.
<b>North West Europe (NWE)</b>	1.2	4.8 (328.6)	Coherent and polycentric pattern of complementary cities, towns and rural areas, coastal and peripheral areas*.
<b>South-West Europe (SUDOE)</b>	1.2	10 (66.0)	Promote dynamic rural areas and develop territorial complementarities for the sustainable planning of SUDOE.
<b>Western Mediterranean (MEDOCC)</b>	4.2	4.8 (103.6)	Promotion of sustainable tourism.

\* Projects on polycentricity fall under the same measure. Source: INTERREG IIIB Programme Documents and ESPON project 2.3.1

### 3.4 A rural-urban typology of INTERREG projects

#### 3.4.1 Methodology and outline of the typology

Previous sections illustrate that the concept of rural-urban relationships is a multi-faceted concept. As the prime

objective of this study is to compare ESPON research with INTERREG practice it would not be appropriate to leave from an ESPON typology to analyse and group INTERREG projects. Going over the description in the various INTERREG databases a typology of INTERREG projects has been developed which reflects the content matter and focus of these projects. This typology is shown in Table 15.

**Table 15** Typology of INTERREG projects according to their content

Type	Keywords/key issues
1. Economic and social development	Employment, labour markets, training, education, urban regeneration, rural development, agricultural diversification, food production and marketing, innovation
2. Services and facilities	Local amenities, services, commerce, settlement structure, cultural facilities
3. Transport, energy, information	Transport networks, information networks, commuting, energy supply
4. Consumption and amenity	Tourism, recreation, leisure, landscape and environment, cultural heritage, open space
5. Demography	Housing, elderly, young people, healthcare
6. Governance	Integrated development, new strategies and planning instruments

In the section on project examples additional explanation is given on the different parts of the typology presented in Table 15. This typology has been developed in a cyclic way. First the content of INTERREG projects has been investigated by going over the descriptions in the databases. On the basis of key words in this database and descriptions to be found on project websites – if available – the distinction between six types has been made. Then the information material on the projects has been investigated for the second time in order to group them and test the typology. The typology would not be valid if for instance one type would fit about all projects.

This does not mean there are no overlaps between the types of projects distinguished here. The main ‘overlap’, if it is valid to speak in such terms, is between economic and social development and all other types. After all there is an economic dimension to about every possible subject. Tourism, for instance, can be seen as an activity of individuals strong related to the characteristic of places and areas in terms of landscape, natural and cultural heritage, climate and weather but also has an important economic dimension to it. It is for this reason tourism figures top of the list

in many strategies aiming for the diversification of the regional economy. Nevertheless there are intrinsic relationships between tourism and the attractiveness of places and areas in the terms used above. Therefore it was decided to include tourism in the category ‘consumption and amenity’.

It is important to underline here that more often than not there is *no explicit mentioning* of the rural-urban dimension in the project description of INTERREG projects. This accounts for the information collected in the ESPON-INTERACT database or made available on the web in the case of INTERREG IIIC projects.<sup>8</sup> This also counts for most of the projects websites themselves. If the prime identification criteria for ESPON projects would have been ‘explicit mentioning of a rural dimension’ just a handful of projects would have been selected. This would not only have reduced the number of projects enormously. It would also have reduced the general issue of rural-urban relationships to just two topics: 1) The settlement pattern in sparsely populated areas; and 2) the often combined topics of the preservation of open spaces and of maintaining high quality urban fringes in areas characterised by a high popula-

<sup>8</sup> In contrast with INTERREG IIIA and IIIB information on all INTERREG IIIC is available at one central website.

tion density and/or urban sprawl. It is mostly in connection with just these two topics that there is explicit mentioning of a relationship between urban and rural areas. Looking at the general discussion on rural-urban relationships and the ESPON discussion such an approach would have led to a limited insight in the different ways to interpret and apply the issue of rural-urban relationships.

There is also another, quite important reason for not limiting ourselves to projects explicitly mentioning rural-urban relationships. Several INTERREG project initiators have had the experience that the label 'rural-urban' is too abstract for potential participants. By switching the vocabulary towards problem orientated concepts like 'access to services' or 'open space' the rural-urban dimension became tangible. Only in this way it became possible to find project partners and to get the project started.<sup>9</sup> This possibly means that the concept of rural-urban relationships is too complex or too vague for (at least some) politicians and administrators. We will come back to this in the final chapter.

### 3.4.2 The distribution of INTERREG projects

The typology of INTERREG projects focussing on the issue of rural-urban relationships has been developed on the basis of the objectives of these projects. Which are the prime issues these projects focus on? Identifying six different project types does not mean that INTERREG projects are evenly distributed across the different categories. In Table 16 the most striking figures have been marked.

First there are marked differences between the different INTERREG strands. As can be expected the most important strand is INTERREG IIIB, followed by INTERREG IIIC. Second there are marked differences in terms of the number of projects focussing on a certain issue. Most projects are either on economic and social development or on consumption and amenity. The former aim for a widening of the economic base of rural areas and making the economy of these areas more robust. The latter focus on tourist development in relation to landscape, nature and scenery and, in some cases rural 'life' in general. More than 60% of the INTERREG IIIA projects we have identified are on these issues.

As is clear from the sections on the ESPON 1.1.2 project and the general discussion of rural-urban relationships in research a great importance is attached to the 'flows' between urban and rural areas. Two types of projects specifically focus on such flows. These are projects which are directed to services and facilities in which population centres and small towns are seen as central places for the areas surrounding them. Projects about transport, energy and information focus on the networks necessary for the flows between urban and rural areas. Taken together they count for nearly 20% of all projects. The number of projects which are about transport, energy and information is small though. This is probably the result of the fact that the majority of projects focussing on these issues fall under other measures and are therefore not (or hardly) motivated in terms of an improvement of the relationships between rural and urban areas.

**Table 16** Distribution of different project types over the INTERREG programmes

Type	INTERREG IIIA*	INTERREG IIIB*	INTERREG IIIC	Total
<b>1. Economic and social development</b>	3	25	7	35
<b>2. Services and facilities</b>	1	13	1	15
<b>3. Transport, energy, information</b>	2	5	--	7
<b>4. Consumption and amenity</b>	10	20	5	35
<b>5. Demography</b>	--	3	--	3
<b>6. Governance</b>	--	7	5	12
<b>Total</b>	16	73	18	107

\* Only the approx 3 000 available projects in the ESPON-INTERACT database in spring 2006 are investigated.

<sup>9</sup> Information derived from the ESPON-INTERACT seminar, The Hague, April 25, 2006.

Having insight in the content of projects and the importance attached to policy issues in terms of the number of projects focussing on these issues leads to the question whether something could be said about the territorial distribution of projects focussing on rural-urban relationships looking at the cooperation areas? There are two relevant dimensions here: The territorial distribution of projects irrespective of their content and the distribution of certain

classes of project depending on their focus. In both respects it is difficult to come to conclusions on INTERREG IIIA projects due to their small number. INTERREG IIIC uses a division of Europe in four macro-regions (North, West, South and East). Projects fall under one of the four areas pending on the location of the Lead Partner. Project partners are in many cases situated in more than one area, so INTERREG IIIC is not included in Table 17.

**Table 17** Distribution of project types over INTERREG IIIB programme areas

Areas*	Economic and social development	Services and facilities	Transport, energy, information	Consumption and amenity	Demography	Governance	TOTAL
Alpine Space		2	1	1		1	5
Atlantic Area	3			1	1		5
Baltic Sea Region	2	1		3		1	7
CADSES	4	1		2		1	8
Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands	3		2	2	1		8
North Sea	1			1		3	5
North West Europe (NWE)				5		1	6
Northern Periphery	3	7	1		1		12
South-West Europe (SUOE)	6	2		1			9
Western Mediterranean (MEDOCC)	3		1	4			8
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>73</b>

\* No information available in the ESPON-INTERACT database on Archimed, Caribbean Space and Indian Ocean/Réunion

In terms of north-south there is no clear pattern emerging from Table 17, if one defines 'north' as Baltic Sea Region, North Sea Region, North West Europe and Northern Periphery and 'south' as Alpine Space, Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands, South-West Europe and Western Mediterranean (the Atlantic Area and CADSES stretch from north to south so these areas cannot be divided along a north-south dimension). Defined in this way 'north' and 'south' account for 30 and 34 projects respectively.

An east-west division can only be artificial: CADSES versus all other programme areas (8 versus 68). Having said that: CADSES is by far the largest INTERREG IIIB area. Taking this into consideration combined with the relatively large budget available for the measure under which rural-urban projects fall and the vast problems in terms of rural development in CADSES one would have expected a larger figure.

Striking is the relatively large number of projects in the programme areas Northern Periphery and MAC: Madeira-Azores-Canaries. Also striking is the fact that North West Europe as the most metropolitan area of all INTERREG IIIB areas accounts for less than 8% of all INTERREG IIIB projects focussing on rural-urban relationships. As is shown by Table 14 the operational programme for NWE has the smallest budget allocated for rural-urban relationships together with the programme for MEDOCC, in both cases measured as a percentage of the overall budget. The NWE measure concerned is also wide, encompassing polycentricity and other issues as well. The small number of rural-urban project in NWE might be caused by strict assessment procedures in the project application phase. Looking at the number of project proposals the interest for rural-urban relationships in NWE has been quite high.<sup>10</sup>

Broadly speaking there is a close relationship between the number of INTERREG IIIB projects focussing on rural-urban relationships and the two dimensions underlying the ESPON 1.1.2 typology of these relationships namely the level of rurality and population-density. INTERREG IIIB projects focussing on rural-urban relationships tend to be clustered in areas characterised by higher levels of agricultural land-use and/or lower levels of population density. When one looks at the rural-urban projects initiated in North West

Europe then it is clear that all about one fall under the category of consumption and amenity. Four out of five of these projects focus on landscape quality and open space: About the archetypal rural-urban issue in areas characterised by high population densities and high levels of urbanisation.

Certain parts of NWE are also part of other INTERREG IIIB areas: Northern Periphery, Atlantic Area, and North Sea. These parts of NWE are on the whole more rural regions in terms of land-use and population density. Actors from these regions which are able to choose to participate in more than one programme and do want to take part in a project focussing on rural issues are more likely to cooperate with counterparts in the Northern Periphery, Atlantic Area and North Sea. An example is the project *Small Town Network*, a Northern Periphery project with a Scottish Lead Partner. Another example: There is only one NWE project with an Irish participant: The *SPAN*-project or Strategic Planning Action Network for Local Development. All five Atlantic Area projects focussing on rural-urban issues have an Irish partner.

The overall conclusion of this section is that there is a strong relationship between the territorial characteristics of an area and the importance attached to rural-urban relationships in an INTERREG programme. Because these programmes function as a filter for project application and project approval, there is a correlation between the ESPON 1.1.2 typology of areas and the number and content of projects to be found in parts of Europe. The relationship between the territorial characteristics of areas and the content of projects will be more extensively discussed in the following section.

### 3.5 INTERREG projects

The previous section introduced a typology of INTERREG projects based not so much on the results of the ESPON 1.1.2 project studying rural-urban relationships but on the content and aims of the INTERREG projects themselves. We have thus followed a bottom-up approach in developing this typology. In the next six sub-sections main examples of INTERREG projects will be discussed, focussing

<sup>10</sup> Information derived from the ESPON-INTERACT seminar, The Hague, April 25, 2006. There are no figures on rural-urban project proposals available for INTERREG IIIB areas. See also Stead & Waterhout 2006: 11.

above all on their key objectives. In this way we further explain why the six themes we have identified are manifestations of the various ways rural-urban relationships are understood in the context of INTERREG cooperation as these relationships are often not made explicit. In some cases we divide INTERREG projects in sub-groups basically introducing sub-types within our main typology.

The analysis of every theme starts with a brief discussion of the spatial pattern of projects. To do this we have mapped the Lead Partner of every project leaving from the official address as mentioned in the various databases. We have not chosen to map all project partners. This choice has been made for practical reasons: With on average five to six partners per project about 400 organisations should have been mapped while not all necessary information on project partners is available in the database. There is also another, more fundamental reason. Sub-projects *within* a rural-urban INTERREG project are not territorially linked to each other in the sense of, for instance, polycentricity projects focussing on the development of mega-corridors (see previous chapter). Each sub-project within a rural-urban project focuses on a situation at a local or regional level. As we have seen in the previous chapter the ESPON project is pursuing a so called three level approach: A macro level (EU), a meso level (transnational and national) and a micro level (regional and local). Rural-urban projects are by nature situated on the micro level. This means that the territorial links between sub-projects is of less importance. The geographical location of Lead Partners is therefore a good proxy for the spatial pattern of projects.

Taking together all the projects falling under the six themes we have identified some remarkable patterns emerging (see Map 12). There are two large clusters of projects: One in the north-west of Europe, the other one in the south-west of Europe, including southern France. Two smaller

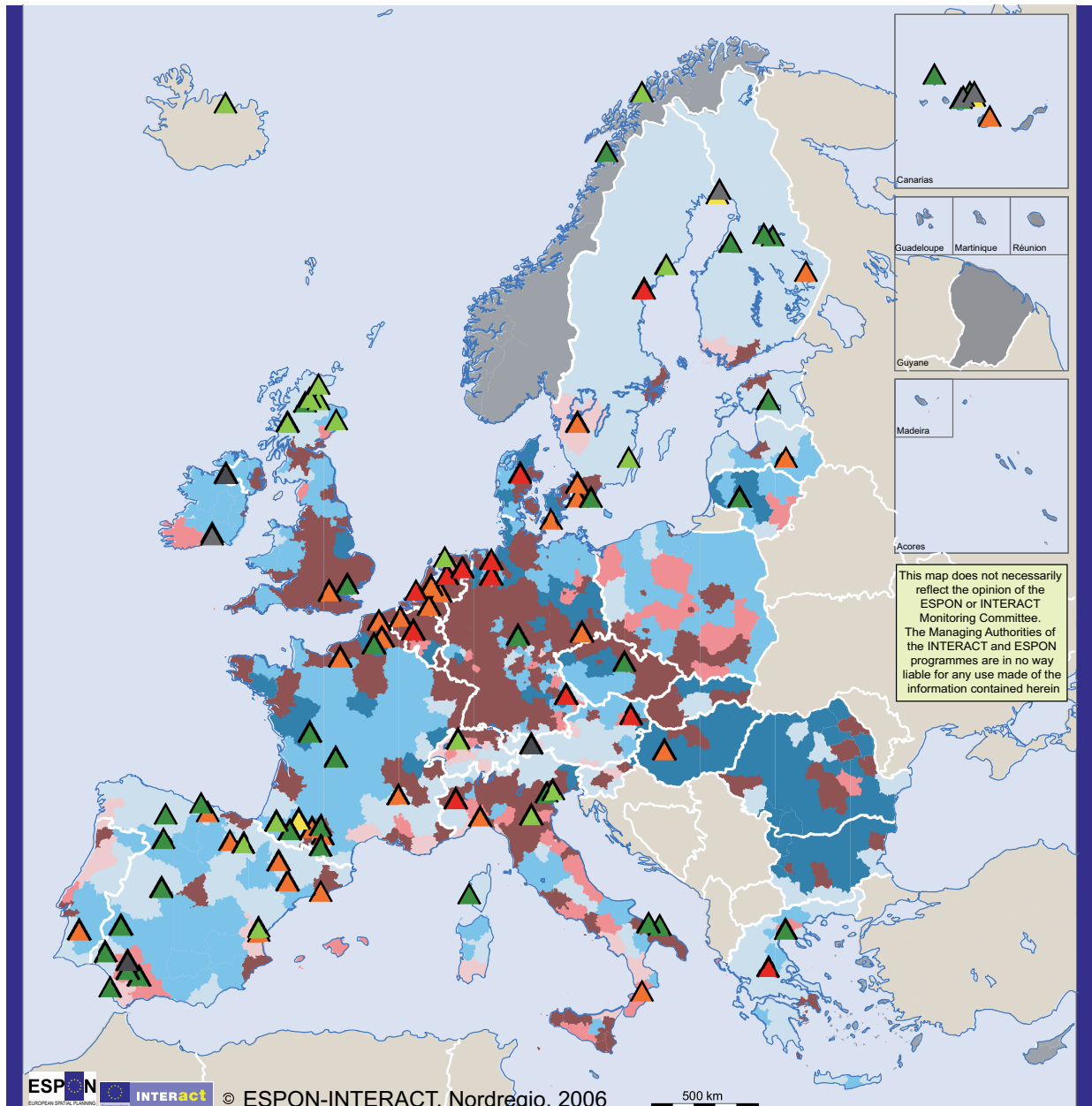
clusters are situated in Scotland and Macaronesia. So using the location of the Lead Partners as the indicator the interest in rural-urban issues is unevenly spread over Europe. At this stage this cannot be explained in full yet. The emphases on rural-urban issues in operational programmes have something to do with this, combined with the decision-making process regarding project proposals (see section 3.3). Of course there is a relationship with the urgency of rural-urban issues and the number of projects, at least this is a relationship one can assume is important.

We would like to suggest though the capacity to function as a Lead Partner and to have available the necessary financial resources to comply with the co-finance regulations are decisive factors. This might explain the fact that there are only five projects with a Lead Partner in the new Member States and the two accession countries. As the Member States of the EU15 (plus Switzerland and Norway) have much more experience in INTERREG one can hope that it is only a matter of time before the level of participation in especially transnational and interregional cooperations shows a more balanced pattern. In the new programming period 2007-13 this should be an absolute priority in which INTERACT can play a vital role.

### 3.5.1 Economic and social development

It should not come as a surprise that the second largest group of INTERREG projects on rural-urban relationships is about economic and social development. The origin of thinking in policy terms on rural-urban relationships is after all to a high degree related to the recognition that in many rural areas in Europe agriculture is becoming of lesser importance to the local and regional economy and that other sectors of the economy therefore have to be stimulated in their development.





**Map 12**  
**Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the six rural-urban themes**

Source: ESPON 112 for the urban-rural typology  
 ESPON-INTERACT Database

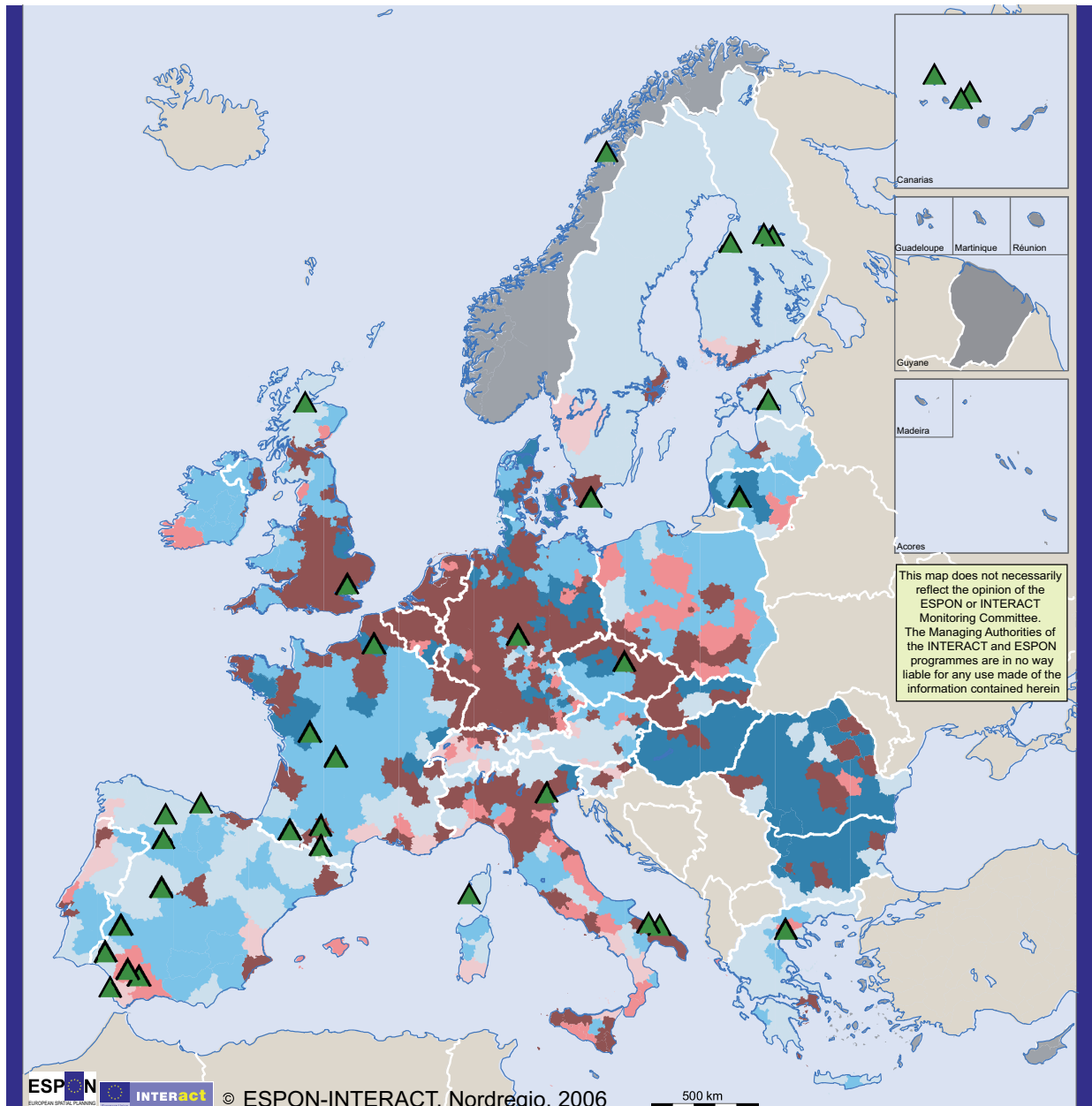
**Lead Partners location**

- ▲ Consumption & Amenities
- ▲ Demography
- ▲ Economic & Social
- ▲ Governance
- ▲ Service & Facilities
- ▲ Transport Energy & Info

**Urban-rural typology**

(based on population density, FUA ranking and land cover)

- High urban influence, high human intervention
- High urban influence, medium human intervention
- High urban influence, low human intervention
- Low urban influence, high human intervention
- Low urban influence, medium human intervention
- Low urban influence, low human intervention
- No database available
- Non-ESPON area



**Map 13**  
**Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of economic and social development**

Source: ESPON 112 for the urban-rural typology  
 ESPON-INTERACT Database

**Lead Partners location**

▲ Economic & Social

**Urban-rural typology**

(based on population density, FUA ranking and land cover)

- High urban influence, high human intervention
- High urban influence, medium human intervention
- High urban influence, low human intervention
- Low urban influence, high human intervention
- Low urban influence, medium human intervention
- Low urban influence, low human intervention
- No database available
- Non-ESPON area

Map 13 shows a few patterns in relation to the spatial pattern of projects looking at where the Lead Partners are situated. First most projects are located in areas which, according to the ESPON urban-rural typology, exhibit a low urban influence. Seen from this angle there is relationship between population density and the need to pursue policies directed towards the economic and social development of rural areas. Two projects in the south of Italy nevertheless illustrate that a high population density can nevertheless go hand in hand with social and economic problems in rural areas. At the other hand the INTERREG IIIC project *PRAXIS*, lead by Essex County Council situated in the almost quintessential metropolitan region of the south-east of England, shows that the issue of fostering rural entrepreneurship – where this project is about – is not just an issue of deep rural areas. Nevertheless – and this is the second clearest spatial pattern of projects focussing on economic and social development – nearly all projects are located outside the *pentagon*. The majority of projects are in the south and southwest of Europe, including the Canaries, and the north of Europe. Having said that one should be cautious about supposing a causal relationship between urban density and rural development. Projects

like *PRAXIS* demonstrate that even in highly urbanised areas there might be problems in terms of rural development, at least this is what INTERREG stakeholders think is the case.

At first sight policies and (INTERREG) projects seeking to enhance the economic and social development of rural areas are rather general, possibly without having a clear impact on the interrelationships between rural and urban areas. The content of INTERREG projects falling in the category of economic and social development tells a different story though.

The partnerships behind nearly all 35 identified projects (see Annex 2) strive for diversification. This either means the encouragement of a diversification of agricultural production at the one hand or the encouragement of the establishment of new enterprises and entrepreneurship not necessarily linked to agricultural production at the other. We therefore made a distinction between *agricultural* diversification and *economic* diversification, although in some projects both goals are important such as in the *AGRO*-project.

### **AGRO: Cooperation and Valorisation of the Rural Patrimony (IIIB Atlantic Area)**

The overall aim of this project, focussing on the agricultural sector, is to utilize the endogenous resources of each region to create a level of economic growth that allows a) improvement of living conditions in rural areas and b) stimulates the development of new small and medium sizes enterprises, both to avoid a rural exodus. Next to that the aim is to produce the tools necessary for sustainable development of natural resources. The project's strategic objectives are:

- To promote in the Atlantic area the coherence between agricultural policies and sustainable development of the territory.
- Bear in mind the specialities of the Atlantic agriculture and promote the extensive typical agriculture connected to the cultural heritage and to the quality food products.
- Promote forestry practices that allow long - term job creation by means of the natural resources valuation.
- Development and exchange of agricultural practices and forestry in harmony with the environment.
- Development of the environmental technologies.

[www.adesper.com/agro/](http://www.adesper.com/agro/)

### **Agricultural diversification**

The aim of agricultural diversification, the objective of a third of the projects in the category 'economic and social development' leaves from the existing agricultural base of an area or region with the objective to change production

in such a way that more added value is created locally. This – ideally – should lead to job creation, which in some cases has lead to a focus on women as unemployment within this group is often considerable higher than average. The project Rural Business Women is a good example (see the text box).

### Rural Business Women (IIIB Northern Periphery)

The aim of the project is to focus on the development of the inhabitants and entrepreneurs in rural areas, especially women's small-scale entrepreneurs and tourism businesses in Northern Peripheral areas. All partner areas have high rates of female unemployment in common, as well as poor infrastructure, depopulation and many natural resources. The main function of the project is to sustain the local economy and create employment possibilities for rural entrepreneurs in nature and tourism business, and related areas, by promoting female entrepreneurship and providing support for the establishment of local business.

[www.matkakori.net](http://www.matkakori.net)

The emphasis in many projects striving for agricultural diversification is on the production of so-called quality products, often with an emphasis on environmentally friendly or organic methods of production. This is apparently seen as an important niche-market. Instead of the production of bulk products to be used as inputs in production facilities often located (far) away from the locations where these inputs have been produced the emphasis is on production of end-products. Strongly put: From the production of anonymous e-numbers on a food label to the production of consumables which literally give the area of production a name through equivalents of the *appellation controlée* system in wine production.

The strategy of agricultural diversification requires the set-up of networks as locally produced (end-) products have to end on the consumer table. So there is a need for marketing networks and logistical networks, amongst others. As companies working in these sectors often are located in urban environment relationships between urban and rural areas change. The *IRENE* INTERREG IIIB project in the CADSES-area catches this quite neatly. The main objective is the 'promotion of structural change' and the restructuring of employment through the diversification of rural economy. This has to be reached through the setting up of local and transnational so called Multifunctional Economic Networks. 'MEN' stands for integration between rural enterprises and villages belonging to different economic sectors of an otherwise homogeneous rural area. The idea is that this helps to overcome the structural difficulties (size, crop specialisation, etc.) every single enterprise faces in

starting employment related multifunctional and development processes. The assumption is that multifunctional economic networks can be set up at the level of the regions involved in this particular projects and that such networks are viable and sustainable.

The quality product approach goes hand in hand with efforts to sell a place or a region as a tourist product (see for example the INTERREG IIIB project *GAPMEDOCC*, Western Mediterranean, in the annex listed under Consumption and amenity). Local products are for instance sold at local and regional markets mentioned in tourist guides. This form of marketing and selling again changes rural-urban relationships. Examples of an agricultural diversification strategy are projects like *AGRO* (INTERREG IIIB, Atlantic Area; see above), *VEREDAS* (IIIB; Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands), *AGROINTEC*, *ECOVERGER*, *BIOFEP* and *FESERPAE* (idem; South-West Europe) and *eFARMER* (IIIC East). The majority of these projects are situated outside north-west Europe, the area with the highest intensity of agricultural production. In terms of political interest the issue of quality products seems to be a niche issue here while apparently the issue is rather big in those areas where the economic productivity is not so high. The *SIMOCA*-project (INTERREG IIIB, CADSES) is a nice example of a project based on the assumption that the production of organic agricultural products will trigger off processes of economic diversification through tourism, new services and the processing of agricultural products (see text box).

### **SIMOCA: Setting up and implementation of sustainable and multifunctional rural development model based on organic and competitive agriculture (IIIB CADSES)**

The general objective of the project is to define a new strategy for sustainable and multifunctional rural development based on the growth of organic farming. For this purpose, territorial integration between CADSES countries will be stimulated by promoting meetings and exchange of knowledge between different bodies that promote land development (decision makers, end-users, etc.). The project has been initiated to fill in a gap in the selected countries: the absence of a sustainable rural development strategy that integrates socio-economic, agricultural, cultural and environmental aspects.

[www.simoca.org](http://www.simoca.org)

The *LOF*-project (IIIC North) is another outspoken example of some of the objectives of the agricultural diversification strategy. The aim of *LOF* ('Contributing to Sustainable Rural Development Through Sharing Experience and Building Capacity in Processing and Marketing of Local and Organic Food') is to develop and promote local and organic food as instruments for supporting sustainable rural development. The partners aim to (1) develop the small-scale processing of local and organic food by farmers and other enterprises; (2) improve the direct marketing and increase the purchasing of local and organic food; and

(3) to maintain and enhance the traditional local food culture. The latter, the cultural dimension of food consumption and production, is taken up in *URGENTE*, an INTERREG IIIB project in South-West Europe. The project seeks to create a new form of citizenship through a development of relationships between consumers and producers, also called CSA: Community Supported Agriculture. So in quite a few projects focussing on agricultural diversification several objectives are intertwined. The assumption shared by all projects is that agricultural production has to change in order to maintain the role of economic carrier.

### **SCRI/SCRI In Action: Structure for Commercialisation of Rural Innovation (IIIB Northern Periphery)**

The original SCRI project aimed to fill a gap perceived in rural, peripheral regions of elements required for the successful generation and growth of micro and small and medium size enterprises (SMEs). Building on the success of the SCRI project (which ended in January 2005), the extension implements the process emerging from joint understanding of the various international experiences. While the SCRI project focussed specifically on four areas (entrepreneurial development, knowledge transfer, company spin-out and distributed support), SCRI in Action focuses on the combination of all these sectors in a way which is relevant to the needs of the local partner communities. In addition, a focus in this phase will be on finding solutions to the remaining issue of securing decentralised, different types of funding for start-up companies, and the cooperation between small and large companies. This will, in effect, put into practice and demonstrate the methodology developed during the SCRI project, which will enhance innovative business development in the region.

[www.scri.eu.com](http://www.scri.eu.com)

### Economic diversification

Agricultural diversification and economic diversification form a continuum. Agrarians seeking to expand their business might end at activities which are not related to agriculture any longer, for instance in the case of a farm turning into a place where health care is offered. So both strategies for diversification meet each other somewhere in the middle so to speak. The strategy of economic diversification is aiming at expanding the range of activities in rural areas, to bring in new sorts of economic activities. About all projects in this category (see Annex 2) aim for the setting up of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In almost all projects there is awareness that the business environment of rural areas in many ways is not friendly for the success of this strategy. Many SMEs have difficulties to find a sufficient economic base (project *Four Corners*, Baltic Sea Region) or have limited access to services and facilities unlike their counterparts in urban areas (project

*Embrace*, CADSES area). The title of the Northern Periphery project *SCRI* is meaningful in this respect. This acronym stands for 'Structure for Commercialisation of Rural Innovation'.

### Improving the business environment

The third and final sub-category of projects aiming to improve the social and economic development has the same overall objectives as the previous one. The main difference is that projects are not specifically targeting the setting up of SME's or the stimulation of entrepreneurship. The prime object is the business environment in general. On the whole projects focus more on the role local and regional government can play to improve the general conditions of entrepreneurship compared with projects in the other two sub-categories. RURAL INNOVA is a good example (see text box).

#### **QUALIMA: Quality of life improvement by supporting public and private services in the rural areas of the Alps (IIIB Alpine Area)**

The increasing social and economic marginality of mountain areas is going hand in hand with a decreasing offer of goods and services available for inhabitants, especially for more vulnerable social groups like elderly. This causes not only a decrease in the quality of life but also a considerable decrease of economic activities. The overall rising age of the inhabitants of mountain areas tends to create an increasing demand for social and healthcare services. QUALIMA proposes to carry out a co-ordinated approach at the regional level. The aim is to create polyfunctional centres/movable services where activities will be coordinated partly through the use of ICT (tele booking, e-commerce, e-government). Because of the widespread occurrence of problems in service provision in the Alpine area several public and private operators covering a huge part of the Alpine Space participate in the QUALIMA project. The partnership includes regional and local public authorities, public actors associations, private partners and spatial planning institutions.

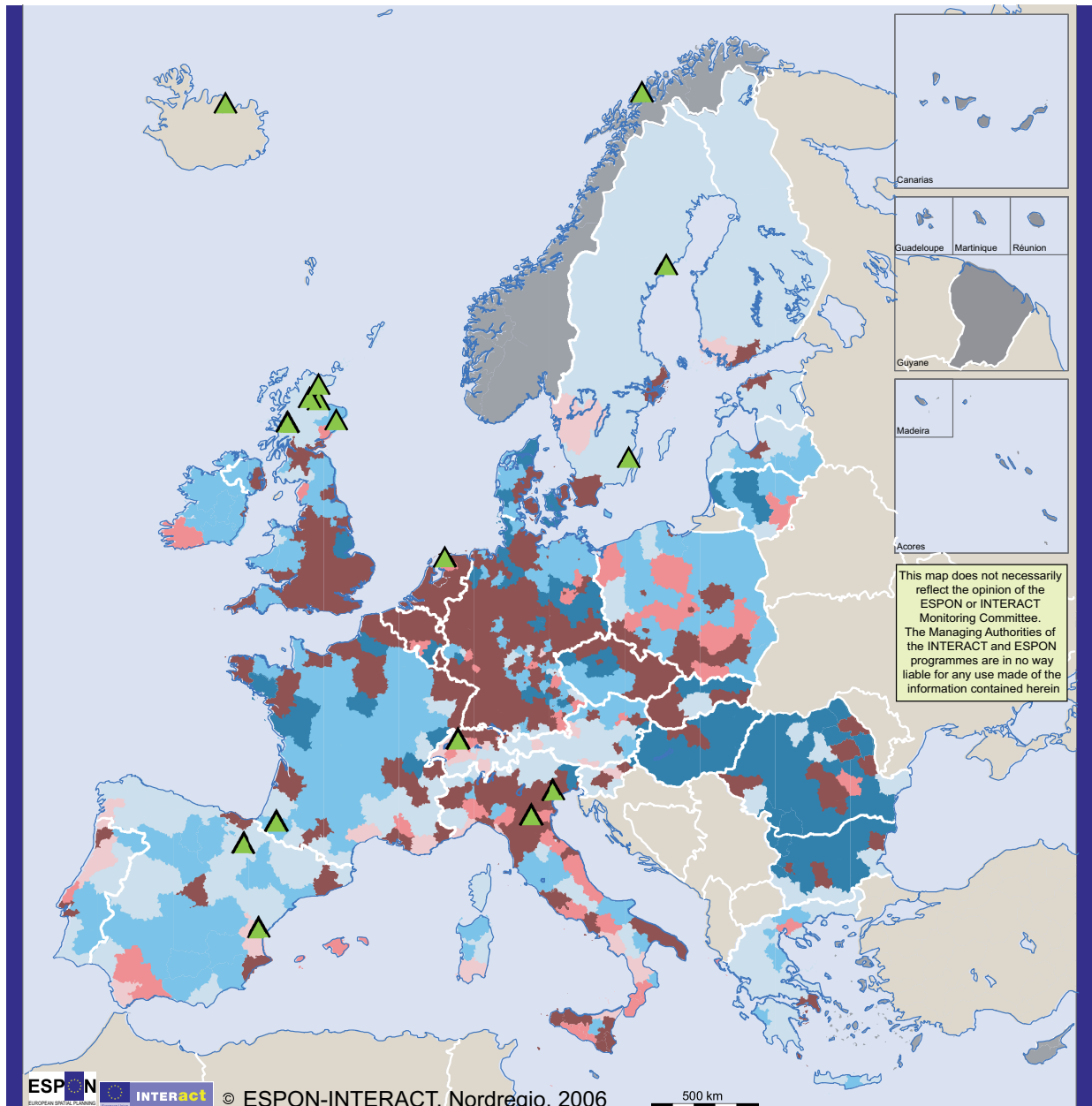
[www.qualima.org](http://www.qualima.org)

### 3.5.2 Services and facilities

Map 14 shows quite a distinct pattern: The overall majority of projects are outside the pentagon area. Nine out of fifteen projects in this category are targeting sparsely populated areas: The Northern Periphery and the mountainous areas of Alpine Space. These projects address what is a key policy issue in such areas: The provision of services. Population figures are often too small and in some cases even dimin-

ishing to maintain basic services. It is in fact this issue which lies behind the principle of territorial cohesion as it figures in the present EC Treaty, Article 16. Territorial cohesion in this article is related to the provision of public services. Especially the government of France has emphasised the importance of this particular article. In many regions coping with a feeble population structure the provision of public services often cannot be guaranteed any longer. Problems are aggravated due to the privatisation of services.





**Map 14**  
**Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of services and facilities**

Source: ESPON 112 for the urban-rural typology  
 ESPON-INTERACT Database

**Lead Partners location**

▲ Service & Facilities

**Urban-rural typology**

(based on population density, FUA ranking and land cover)

- High urban influence, high human intervention
- High urban influence, medium human intervention
- High urban influence, low human intervention
- Low urban influence, high human intervention
- Low urban influence, medium human intervention
- Low urban influence, low human intervention
- No database available
- Non-ESPON area



Quite a number of projects in this category do not address a certain type of services but services in general. The *QUALIMA* project is a good example of what is considered as being at stake namely an acceptable quality of life and what is described as 'the conservation of the territory'. On the operational level the project is targeting the creation of multifunctional sites, where a variety of services can be offered in order to save overhead costs. Another strategy is the creation of 'movable services': By moving services around the catchment area of these services is enlarged. Also services can be offered to certain population groups which are not mobile. *PUSEMOR* (also Alpine Space) and *DESERVE* (Northern Periphery) have similar objectives. In several other projects the focus is on a particular class of services, mainly in health care. Examples are *ATSRuAR* and *Sustainable Health Care Networks* (both Northern

Periphery). The project *Community Learning Networks* (Northern Periphery) is about the education system.

There is an important group of projects targeting the issues of services and facilities in an indirect way. These are projects focusing on settlement structure and the role of small and medium-sized cities. Seen from this angle there is an overlap with the polycentricity theme. It concerns all those projects focussing on urban settlements but not with the aim to create new economic integration zones (the main objective of the polycentricity concept) but aiming for the maintenance and improvement of service levels. The main projects are *Baltic Balance* (Baltic Sea Region), *REPUS* (CADSES), *Small Town Networks* (Northern Periphery), *CIUMED* and *A.T.I.* (both South West Europe) and *SusSet* (a IIC West project).

#### **CIUMED: Medium-sized cities of south western Europe (IIIB SUDOE)**

The Network for the Promotion of Medium-sized Cities in South West Europe (CIUMED Network) is a non-profit private association. Membership is open to all medium-sized cities in South-West Europe (having more than 20 000 inhabitants and less than 150 000 inhabitants) and other public or private authorities that can identify with the objectives of the network and work towards accomplishing them. Main objectives include the development of urban-rural synergies to strengthen geographical cohesion.

[www.ciumed.org](http://www.ciumed.org)

All these projects give the message that a main goal of the ESDP polycentricity concept – the creation of new global integration zones - is not valid for large areas of the EU.<sup>11</sup> In the absence of large cities great parts of Europe depend on the performance of smaller cities not only in terms of economic development in general but also in terms of access to services and facilities considered as basic in terms of quality of life.

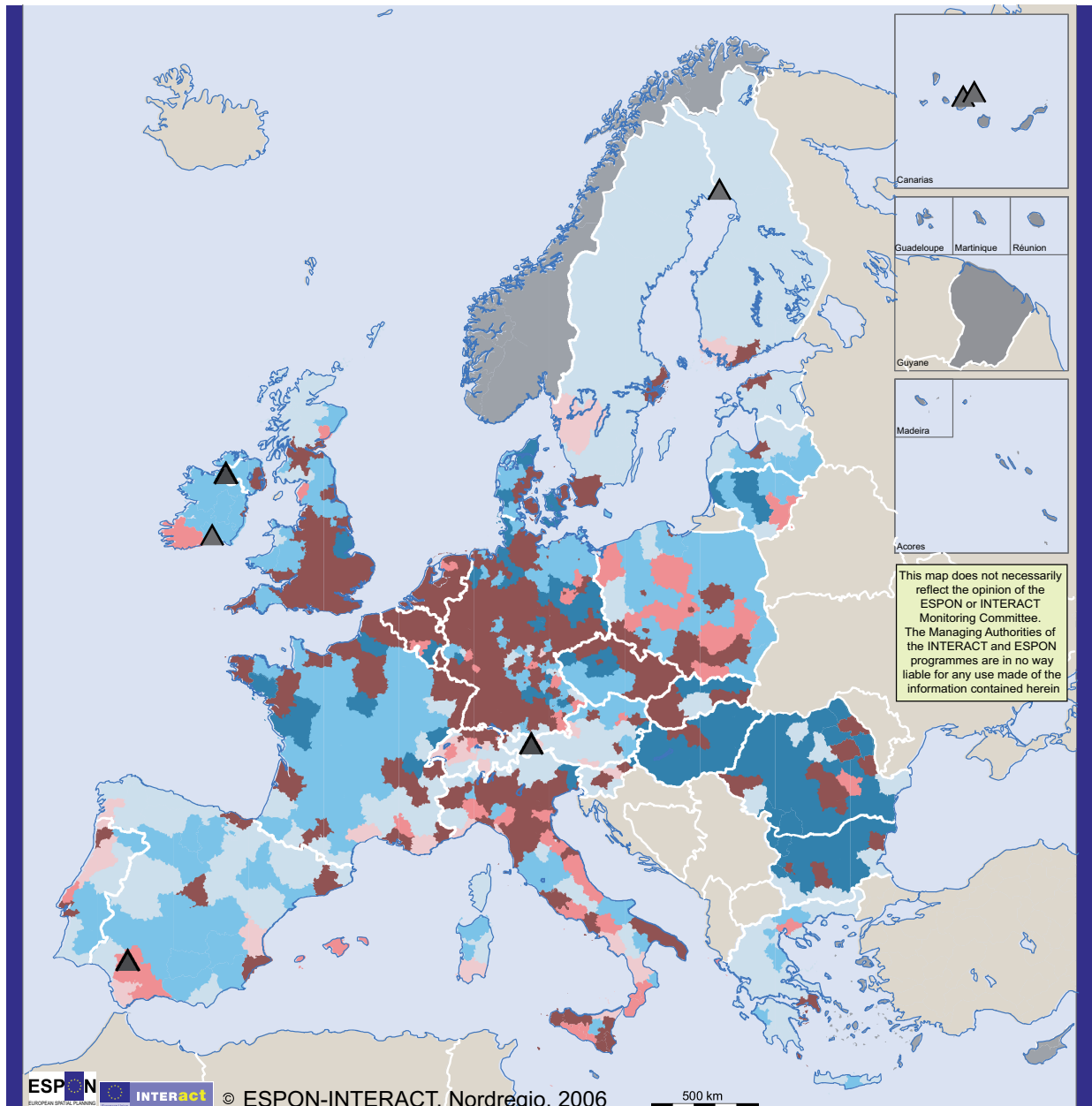
'Smaller cities' greatly differ in their size. In the CIUMED network (see the box) there is explicit mentioning of a lower and upper limit: 20 000 and 150 000 inhabitants respectively. In other projects such limits remain implicit. Defining thresholds though depends on the general geographical context. For instance: The low population densities in the Northern Periphery causes much smaller municipalities to

participate in projects focussing on the enhancement of the role played by small and medium-sized cities.

#### **3.5.3 Transport, energy and information**

There are only a handful of INTERREG projects concerned with transport, energy and information that address urban-rural issues (Map 15). Most of these are INTERREG IIIB projects and are found in the more rural INTERREG programming areas (Alpine Space; Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands,; Northern Periphery; Western Mediterranean). A number of these projects are concerned with improving access to information and communication as a way of reducing some of the disadvantages of low levels of physical accessibility in remote rural areas.

<sup>11</sup> See for this: Hague & Jenkins, 2005.



**Map 15**  
**Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of transport, energy and information**

Source: ESPON 112 for the urban-rural typology  
 ESPON-INTERACT Database

**Lead Partners location**

▲ Transport Energy & Info

**Urban-rural typology**

(based on population density, FUA ranking and land cover)

- High urban influence, high human intervention
- High urban influence, medium human intervention
- High urban influence, low human intervention
- Low urban influence, high human intervention
- Low urban influence, medium human intervention
- Low urban influence, low human intervention
- No database available
- Non-ESPON area

Improving the virtual accessibility of rural areas can have various effects on urban-rural relationships, such as creating more varied opportunities for employment in rural areas and increasing accessibility to online broadband facilities and services, which have potential benefits for increasing quality of life for local residents, and promoting a more balanced local population. Examples of broadband projects include *ANT* (IIIB Alpine Space), *BIRRA* (IIIB Northern Periphery), *INFOBAND* (IIIB Madeira-Azores-Canary

Islands) and *PEBA* (IIIB Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands). The *ANT* project (Alpine Network) for example supports innovative IT pilot projects and promotes transnational and intraregional networking, know-how transfer and education of 'local innovators'. The *BIRRA* project (Broadband in Remote and Rural Areas) involves a number of activities focused around learning from best practice in more advanced regions and identifying solutions relevant to specific regional requirements.

### **REVER MED: Réseau Vert Européen dans l'espace MEDOCC (IIIB MEDOCC)**

The aim of this project is to create a network of greenway routes for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, linking Portugal's Algarve with southern Italy via the Mediterranean regions of Spain and France.

The project brings together 32 partner organisations from Spain, Portugal, France and Italy, including representatives of national, regional and local government and other public institutions. It is led by the Regional Government of Andalusia, with transnational coordination carried out by the European Greenways Association and technical guidance from the Spanish Railways Foundation.

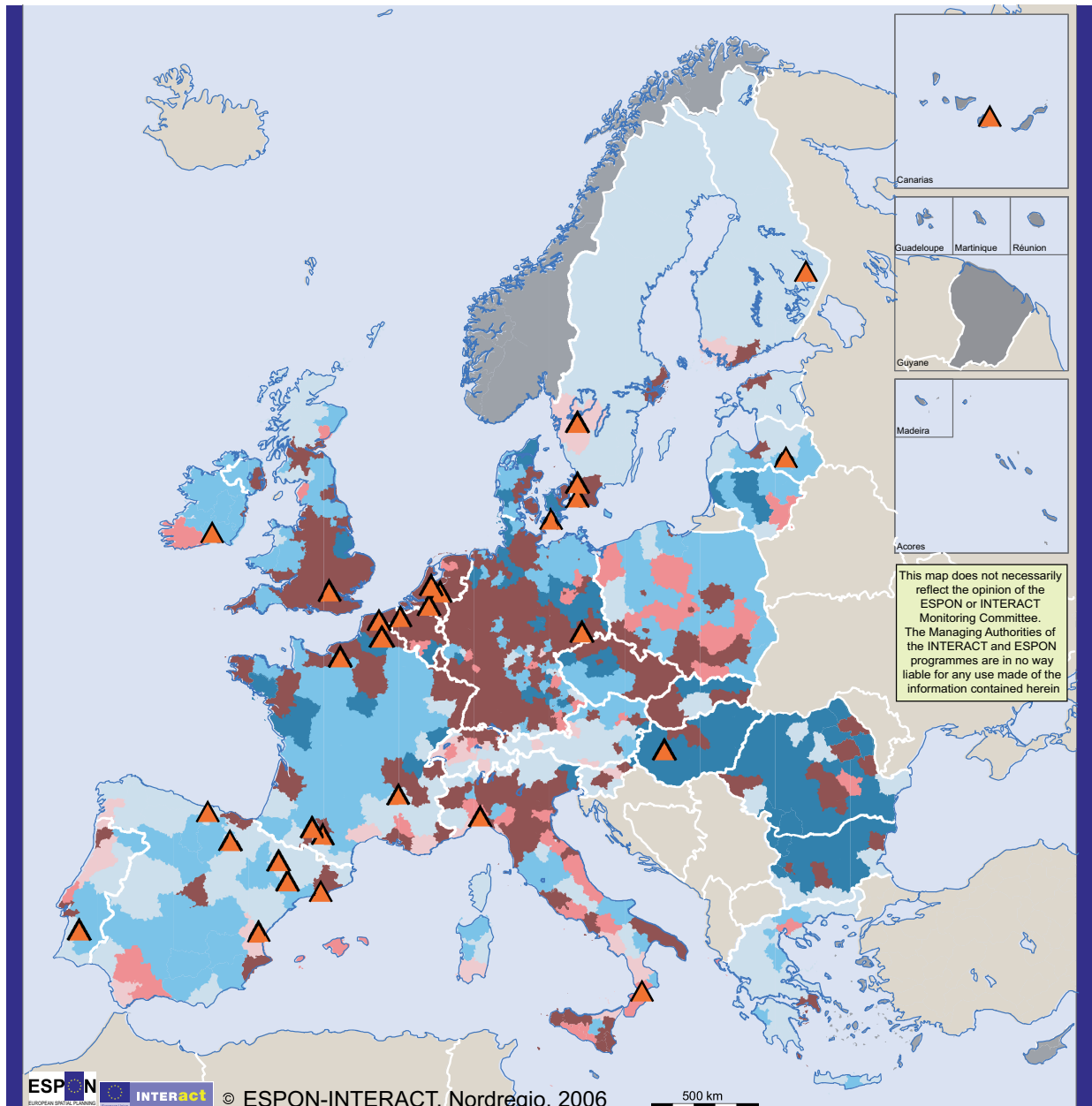
[www.revermed.com](http://www.revermed.com)

Few INTERREG projects concerning transport and mobility directly address urban-rural issues. Exceptions here are the IIIA France-Spain project on the rehabilitation of cross-border routes for hiking and the IIIB *REVER-MED* project (Western Mediterranean, MEDOCC), concerned with establishing 'greenways' – sustainable transport routes between urban and rural areas for pedestrians and cyclists. This project aims at developing a green network of communication roads dedicated to non-motorised circulation along the whole of the West European Mediterranean. The total network will be 10 000 km in length and will connect the south of Portugal with the south of Italy, passing through the Mediterranean regions of Spain and France. The green network will be made up of green roads, tracks,

riverbank roads and roads running alongside canals, cycling tracks, rural paths and roads with light traffic.

### **3.5.4 Consumption and amenity**

There are a relatively large number of INTERREG projects concerned with consumption and amenity that address urban-rural issues. Three spatial clusters of projects are apparent: One in the Low Countries and northern France, a second in the Pyrenees and a third on the mouth of the Baltic (Map 16). The remaining projects concerned with consumption and amenity are fairly evenly spread across the EU territory.



Map 16

Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of consumption and amenity

Source: ESPON 112 for the urban-rural typology  
ESPON-INTERACT Database

Lead Partners location

- ▲ Consumption & Amenities

Urban-rural typology

(based on population density, FUA ranking and land cover)

- High urban influence, high human intervention
- High urban influence, medium human intervention
- High urban influence, low human intervention
- Low urban influence, high human intervention
- Low urban influence, medium human intervention
- Low urban influence, low human intervention
- No database available
- Non-ESPON area

Three main types of INTERREG project under the heading of consumption and amenity can be distinguished: Projects that focus on rural tourism, projects that focus on local products, projects that focus on landscape, the built environment and environmental protection. These are described in turn below.

### **Rural tourism**

This first group of projects seeks to develop the potential of rural areas for recreation and tourism, catering mainly for an urban clientele in search of things like rest, relaxation, wildlife and open space. A substantial number of these projects focus on sustainable tourism: Trying to promote and increase tourism on the one hand whilst seeking to minimise impacts on the local environment on the other hand. Most of these projects are funded through INTERREG strand A, especially in rural areas that are within close proximity to more urban areas (e.g. North West Europe). Other projects concerning rural tourism can mainly be found in INTERREG strand C. The INTERREG IIIA Ireland-Wales *TWIGS* project (Tourism Wales and Ireland Green and Sustainable) for example aims to promote collaboration between various agencies and communities to achieve synergy in the development of quality green tourism, develop best practice in the development of authentic rural tourism, engage local communities in the development of quality green tourism and create action plans for the development of green tourism. The *Pilelandet* project, also an INTERREG IIIA project, has similar goals but differs from the *TWIGS* project as it is about an area forming the hinterland of an urban region.

### **Local products**

In the second group of projects, focusing on local products, many projects seek to increase awareness about traditions and regional products and increase the local mar-

ket for products in order to stimulate the rural economy. As in the case of the previous group of projects, the main client group for local products is urban, particularly those with an interest in retaining local traditions and/or in reducing the 'environmental footprint' of consumption patterns. Many projects in this group are found in INTERREG strand A, particularly in the more rural parts of Europe as defined by the typology of ESPON 1.1.2. There is a strong link between many of these projects and some of those identified under the heading of economic and social development (see above).

### **Landscape, the built environment and environmental protection**

The third group of projects under the heading of consumption and amenity focus on landscape, the built environment and environmental protection. In most of these projects, the focus is on the exploitation, management and/or protection of areas with specific landscapes, habitats or buildings. The location of these areas is diverse: Some are rural (e.g. *BIRD*, *HERITOUR*, *MACARURAL*), others are peri-urban (e.g. *SEPTENTRION*, *EURMET*, *LIFESCAPE*) and others are urban (e.g. *GreenKeys*, *SOS II*, *SAUL*). Some of these areas are important because they contain unique landscapes, habitats or buildings whilst others are more important because of the role they play in providing amenity and open space for urban areas (e.g. urban parks, greenbelts). Various areas with specific landscapes and habitats are of course important for tourism. Some projects in this group are thus closely related to those focusing on rural tourism (see above). The majority of projects in this group are found in INTERREG strand B, particularly in the more urban parts of Europe as defined by the typology of ESPON 1.1.2, and especially in North West Europe (e.g. *SOS II*, *SEPTENTRION*, *BOUNDLESS PARKS*, *LIFESCAPE*, *SAUL*).

### **SAUL: Sustainable and Accessible Urban Spaces (IIIB North West Europe)**

The project takes forward an INTERREG IIC project (New Methods in Socially Compatible Development of Urban Landscapes) to the development phase, to tackle the question of the role of 'socially-inclusive' spaces in metropolitan regions, as well as the themes of regional identity and learning in planning cultures and partnerships. The objective of the project is to develop and test a range of practical solutions formulated through a transnational partnership to the challenges described in four key areas. Its aims are:

- To recognise and demonstrate the vital role of socially-inclusive spaces in the sustainable development of the metropolitan region.
- To promote regional identity, and the importance of the regional dimension within spatial planning in north west Europe.
- To establish more effective planning through transnational partnerships by moving towards a new planning culture.
- To develop a transnational and regional process of learning.

The SAUL project comprises several transnational teams charged with the joint planning, design and implementation of a range of demonstration projects. Encompassing 12 investments across 6 regions, the project partners intend for their newly-tested strategies to be taken up as integral parts of national regional strategies.

[www.saulproject.net](http://www.saulproject.net)

### **3.5.5 Demography**

A main subject for concern in many European rural areas is depopulation. Here we are dealing with an outspoken rural-urban relationship as in about all cases of areas having to cope with depopulation the key issue is migration to cities and urban regions located elsewhere. As is nearly always the case with migration this type of outward migration is selective. Especially young/youngish people tend to move in search for job opportunities or higher education. Many INTERREG projects classified under the five themes have depopulation as an important issue. The idea is that

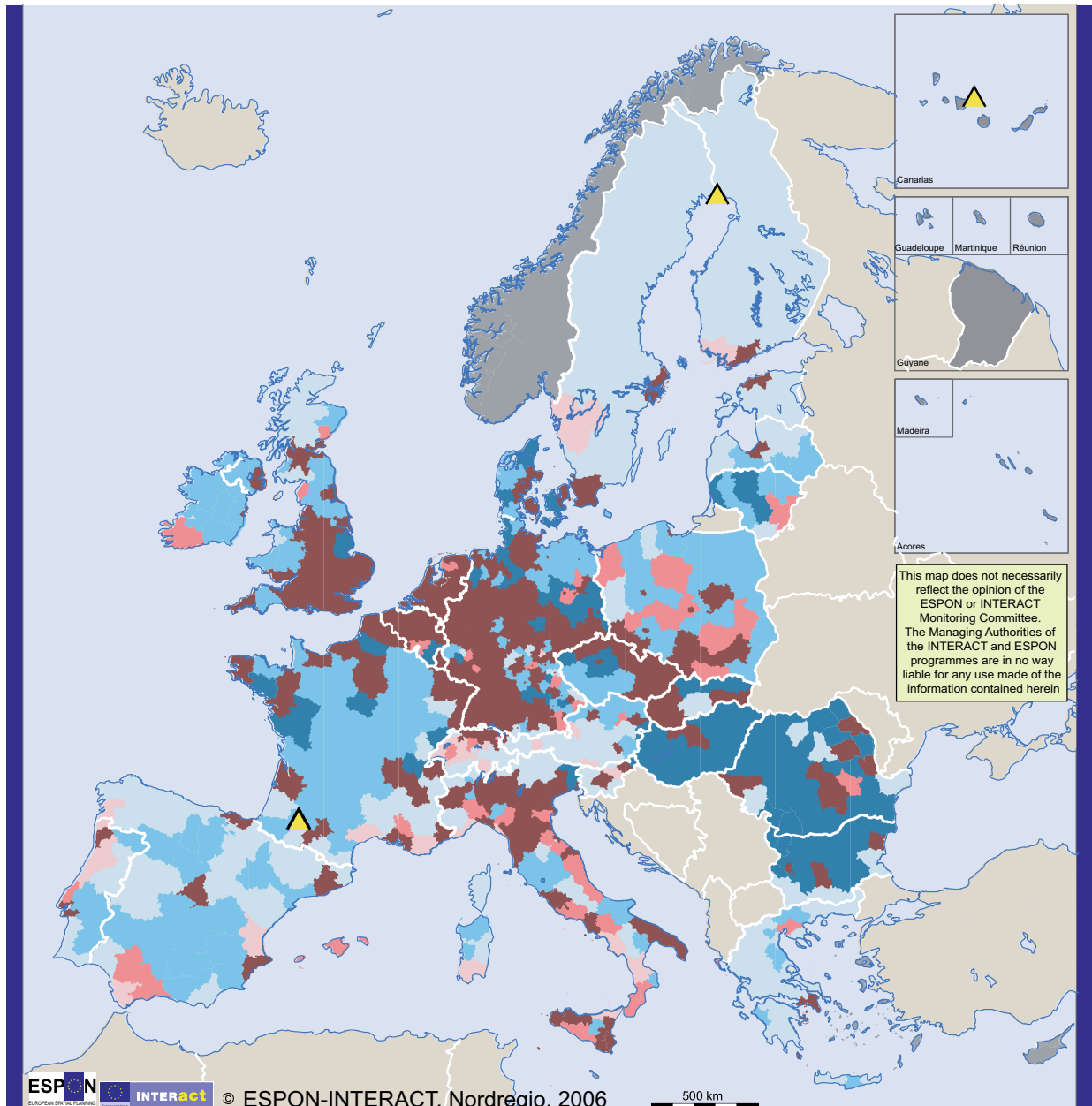
if rural areas become more attractive in terms of, for instance, economic development or the presence of services and facilities people are more inclined to stay or to return. There are a small number of projects entirely focussing on the issues of population and migration. Consequently, little can be said about the spatial distribution of these projects, except that they are all in remote, peripheral parts of Europe (Map 17). Two projects focus on youth groups (*ROOTS* and *PICYBU*). The Macaronesia IIIB project *SOHO/SOLO* has an interesting subject namely to incite people to migrate towards the participating regions.

### **PICYBU: Participation in rural areas by young broadband users (IIIB Northern Periphery)**

The objective of the project is to test, pilot and evaluate how different media and ICT applications and tools can contribute in the social participation of young people in rural communities. The participation will increase their interest in their home region and willingness to stay there. The vision is the 'attractive rural life style'. There are four main application areas where pilots will be run: media as a tool for young people; participation; 24-hour society (services) for young people; and business in rural areas. Participating countries are Sweden, Finland, Faroe Islands and Norway. The main target group (beneficiaries) is the young people living in the rural Northern Periphery areas (12-25 years old). They may be pupils at schools, unemployed or at work. Special beneficiary groups are young people who act as tutors in the project and young people who plan becoming entrepreneurs in the rural areas. The secondary target group is the people (adults) nearby the young people (parents, teachers, others).

[www.picybu.org](http://www.picybu.org)





**Map 17**  
**Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of demography**

Source: ESPON 112 for the urban-rural typology  
 ESPON-INTERACT Database

**Lead Partners location**

▲ Demography

**Urban-rural typology**

(based on population density, FUA ranking and land cover)

- High urban influence, high human intervention
- High urban influence, medium human intervention
- High urban influence, low human intervention
- Low urban influence, high human intervention
- Low urban influence, medium human intervention
- Low urban influence, low human intervention
- No database available
- Non-ESPON area



### 3.5.6 Governance

The main difference between projects we have classified under ‘governance’ and all other projects is that the objectives and approaches are much wider than all other projects. Although almost none of the projects selected in the other five categories could be typified as sectoral the thinking in governance projects is rather comprehensive, combining and joining a host of different policy issues. This is a typical characteristic of a territorial approach in which policy issues are not selected because of their intrinsic characteristics but as the result of their interrelationships with other issues played out in the same area or at the same place.

Just looking at the location of Lead Partners in governance projects there is a distinct spatial patterns with six projects clustered in the north-west of Europe (see Map 18). This is probably no coincidence as the spatial planning systems in this part of Europe have comprehensive ambitions, meaning that a major aim is to overcome sectoral boundaries and to integrate policies because of their spatial effects.

The downside of comprehensive projects is that they may get across as somewhat unfocused. This could hamper progress within the project partnership as in a transnational setting in general a lot of time and energy has to be devoted at reaching a common understanding and at crossing political-cultural boundaries. Evaluating this goes beyond the brief of this research though.

Some governance-projects could as easily be designated as projects focussing on polycentricity as they are on the role of small towns. The projects are *ALPCITY*, *Town-Net* and *SPAN* which indeed have been selected as polycentricity projects as well, also under the heading of governance. The main reason we have not classified these projects under the heading of services and facilities is that these (three) projects embrace a wider set of objectives.

An example of a comprehensive project is *COHESION*, a project in CADSES addressing the diminishing competitiveness of many rural areas in this part of Europe. Integrated planning is called for to overcome the ‘shortage of resources’ available. *NS RURAL*, a project within the North Sea Region is also an example of a comprehensive approach focussing on issues which are the object of projects we have classified under different headings: The provision of social and health services and transport services and economic development in general. With a slightly different set of policy issues the same counts for *ProMidNord*, a project in the Baltic Sea Region.

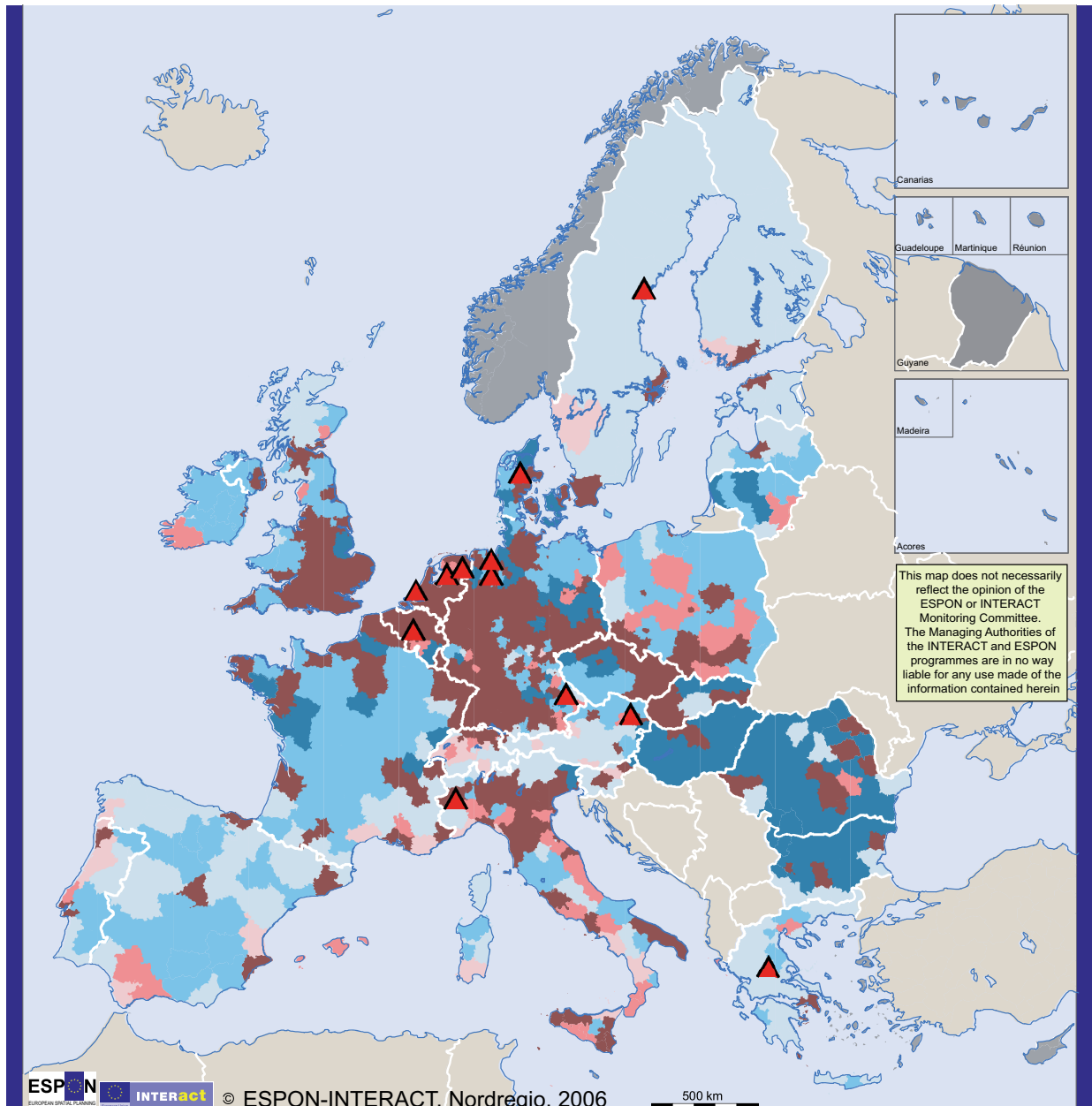
There is a handful of project aiming for the delivery of some sort of concrete policy instrument. All projects which do have this aim are INTERREG IIIC projects which do make sense taking the overall objectives of INTERREG IIIC into account. The *ALICERA* project has the objective to introduce a new education instrument called RAL (Rural Action Learning) which should contribute to capacity building and the mobilisation of certain groups in rural societies. *FAR-LAND* focuses in particular on local and regional government agencies as the objective is to develop an Integrated Land Development approach as so many policy issues are intertwined. *ICNW* has similar objectives.

Under the heading of governance two projects stand out not only because they seem to have common objectives: The INTERREG IIIB project (North Sea Region) *URBAL* and the INTERREG IIIC project *RISE*. Both focus on areas which are neither urban nor rural. In the *URBAL* project these areas are designated as *URBAL*-spaces reflecting the joining of areas on the level of language. *RISE* adds the dimension of densely populated rural spaces. But as densely is a relative term, depending on the national context, there does not seem to be a lot of difference in this respect between *RISE* and *URBAL*.

#### **RISE: Regional Identity and culture, Strengths development & Environment action (IIIC East)**

RISE focuses on the development of ‘urbanized’ rural spaces. The operation aims at exchanging information and experience and implementing specific regional development actions in densely populated rural spaces. Specific emphasis is placed on innovative measures based on regional identity and culture, economic development and environmental action.

[www.interreg-rise.de](http://www.interreg-rise.de)



**Map 18**  
**Location of INTERREG Lead Partners for the theme of governance**

Source: ESPON 112 for the urban-rural typology  
 ESPON-INTERACT Database

**Lead Partners location**

▲ Governance

**Urban-rural typology**

(based on population density, FUA ranking and land cover)

- High urban influence, high human intervention
- High urban influence, medium human intervention
- High urban influence, low human intervention
- Low urban influence, high human intervention
- Low urban influence, medium human intervention
- Low urban influence, low human intervention
- No database available
- Non-ESPON area

### 3.6 Conclusions

The issue of rural-urban relationships is obviously recognised as a multifaceted issue. In this respect there are no clear differences between ESPON and INTERREG. Up to a certain level there are even communalities in efforts to make the concept of rural-urban relationships more tangible. An aim of ESPON has been to deconstruct the concept of rural-urban relationships in such a way that it could be linked to empirical data. In INTERREG the concept of urban-rural relationships has been translated into issues which are recognised by project stakeholders as urgent and relevant. The difference though is that researchers are trained to use complicated notions in their vocabulary while this is less the case in (INTERREG) politics. We have even found evidence that it was difficult to find political interest in (draft) projects if the outline of these projects was not framed in a vocabulary which could be linked to political issues.

Seen from this perspective (i.e. an understandable political vocabulary) it should not come as a surprise that on the whole the issue of rural-urban relationships remains rather implicit in INTERREG projects and (some) INTERREG operational programmes. The focus of many projects is formulated in terms of urban or rural issues and the development of urban or rural areas. If we had restricted ourselves to the selection of just those projects where the stakeholders have formulated the objectives of their cooperation explicitly in terms of rural-urban relationships, only a handful of projects would have been selected. We have widened the circle of relevant projects to include those projects which have a clear rural-urban dimension, even though this is not always explicit.

Having said that: There are big similarities in the thematic content of INTERREG projects and the way rural-urban relationships are understood in ESPON. The resemblance between the six themes we have identified as being the object of INTERREG projects and the various sorts of rural-urban relationships as identified in ESPON is rather big.

It has been a great challenge in ESPON to address the more dynamic part of rural-urban relationships, generally described in terms of 'flows'. Reliable and comparable data on flows between rural and urban areas are highly wanted by the research community. Almost likewise flows

are seldom the object of INTERREG projects. Project initiators and stakeholders found flows as difficult to approach and treat as researchers.

Certain flows are almost absent in INTERREG cooperation in the field of rural-urban relationships. Water flows form an example here. Water management is indeed an issue in INTERREG cooperation but this issue is on the whole not framed in terms of rural-urban relationships. It is not difficult to see we are dealing with an issue which has an important rural-urban dimension. One can think of measures to prevent the flooding of cities and urban regions which almost by nature have to be taken in rural areas. The same counts for the production of drinking water. Also flows of energy can be framed in terms of rural-urban relationships. The future shortage of oil will almost certainly put the issue of bio-energy production high on the political agenda. Currently it is almost absent on the INTERREG agenda.

ESPON research and INTERREG cooperation are showing some resemblances, but also some differences. The ESPON project is pursuing a so called three level approach: A macro level (EU), a meso level (transnational and national) and a micro level (regional and local). Rural-urban projects are by nature situated on the micro level. This means that the territorial links between sub-projects is of less importance. With the exception of partners in (cross-border) INTERREG IIIA projects partners form alliances not because of intrinsic territorial relationships but because they expect to learn from each other. They do not have to be neighbours. Without in-depth case research it is difficult to assess whether INTERREG cooperation indeed is leading to widespread transnational learning. The widespread use of (sometimes excellent) project websites is an indication that this learning ambition is taken seriously although the use of internet as a tool is not evenly spread over Europe. We believe that if (transnational and inter-regional) learning is a main objective of European territorial cooperation much research effort is needed to make this work.

Looking at the map of Europe and the spatial distribution of INTERREG projects we have been able to identify several patterns. In some cases projects on certain issues tend to cluster, as is the case with the governance theme for instance. We have recorded the small number of INTERREG IIIB and IIIC projects in the new Member States

and the accession countries. This forms a great challenge for the years ahead.

A spatial pattern we have not touched upon so far is the almost absence of INTERREG cooperation in the field of rural-urban relationships in the larger FUAs (Functional Urban Areas) and MEGAs (Metropolitan European Growth Areas). Some large cities participate in projects but this is rather exceptional. In contrast: There are many projects in which small and medium-sized cities participate. Getting the large cities of Europe involved in territorial cooperation on rural-urban issues is thus a great challenge for the period 2007-13.

## 4 Conclusions and recommendations: Future territorial cooperation and ESPON research

### 4.1 ESPON: Becoming visible, understandable and relevant to practitioners

In a survey (to be published as an update of the ESPON 2.2.1. project later this year), a majority of responding INTERREG project coordinators (132 respondents) stated that they either had not heard of the ESPON programme before or that the ESPON findings and results were not still clear to them. In the INTERREG project documentation (websites, databases) little reference to ESPON projects can be found. A major reason for this is probably that the various INTERREG programmes were well underway when the ESPON programme started in 2002. It has to be kept in mind as well that the ESPON research projects did not start at the same time but at various dates over a period of about three to four years. The results of research projects relevant for INTERREG projects might not have arrived at the right moment in time to have an impact. Nevertheless the results of the ESPON 2.2.1 survey should be taken seriously. To avoid a gap between the European research community and the INTERREG/European territorial cooperation ESPON research faces the following three challenges:

- A greater visibility to practitioners;
- An improved capability to translate the results into material that could be understandable to people outside the ESPON-sphere;
- To carry out targeted research which supports European territorial cooperation.

#### The visibility of ESPON research

Although application of research in policy making cannot be predicted it can be influenced. This is why a *proactive strategy* is needed. A lot of effort is made already to disseminate the results of the ESPON programme. We think that in ESPON2 such dissemination should be a key task to be carried out by the ESPON Coordination Unit, but also by the transnational research groups participating in the ESPON programme. Future European Territorial Cooperation Objective (ETC) projects form a key domain for the application of ESPON results. Targeted dissemina-

tion of ESPON results is needed through (amongst others) readable and short (!) summaries/flyers about ESPON projects, a high frequency of ESPON briefing reports, setting up of web links between the future ETC programme websites and the ESPON website, etc. *A deepening of the cooperation between ESPON and INTERACT* should be considered as well. Within the context of this cooperation instruments and procedures can be developed, in *cooperation with the future ETC secretariats*, about the various ways ESPON and INTERREG can be brought together.

#### ESPON research being understandable

The transnational ESPON research groups face a *double challenge*: Their research not only has to match scientific standards but also has to be relevant for policy makers. The various groups have to be stimulated to produce relevant and readable research reports. This could be done by the inclusion of *a section on the delivery of key messages to the INTERREG/ETC community* in the terms of references of ESPON projects. ESPON seminars are mainly attended by the ESPON research community. Next to these seminars one can think of the organisation of *communities of practices* around key issues of ESPON research and INTERREG projects. This might be helpful to stimulate learning processes: Researchers can learn from policy practitioners and vice versa: Practitioners can learn how to integrate relevant research outcomes in their activities. To stimulate learning processes between the ESPON and INTERREG/ETC communities the *proceedings and results of INTERREG/ETC should become much more accessible*. Currently information on programmes and projects is erratic and only partially available. Transnational and interregional cooperation have learning as a key aim. Learning though can only take place on the basis of reliable and up to date knowledge on aims, objectives and achievements of projects. In our view this is not compatible with programmes and projects barely recognisable to outsiders.

#### ESPON research relevant to practitioners

The ESPON programme is currently organised around some of the key aims and objectives and concepts of the

1999 European Spatial Development Perspective. European Territorial Cooperation, the (new) third objective of the structure funds, will be the key arena to show the *added value of a territorial approach*. An ESPON2 programme should be set up at least partially around the research needs of the INTERREG community. Up to a certain degree these research needs can be deduced from current INTERREG IIIA/B/C projects (related to polycentricity and rural-urban relationships: See below).

In relation to the theme of polycentricity research issues meeting the needs of the INTERREG communities include:

- Use more narrow scale territorial units for the analysis, such as Local Administrative Units (LAU 1/2). Indeed, the work performed by ESPON 1.1.1 essentially provides information on the pattern of urban networks at the European scale. The information is either based on labour market areas, or on data available at the NUTS3 level. This can be considered too coarse to undertake analyses adapted to the content of INTERREG programmes and projects. Relevant from this perspective would be identifying territories with different degrees of urban integration.
- A focus on dynamics instead of a static picture of the territory. Especially when strategic projects are undertaken there is a need to carry out investigations dealing with trends and possible futures, rather than analysing the current state. The FUA typology was predominantly built around static indicators. The challenge here is to take into account changes in the structure of the territory (i.e. the actual extent of metropolitan regions, labour market areas etc.) and the changing social and economic characteristics of areas.
- This leads to a need to re-think the MEGA typology by taking a more prospective approach than the essentially descriptive one initiated in the ESPON 1.1.1 project. This means, for instance, a focus on the development potential of each urban node rather than on the present endowment of metropolitan areas. This would give INTERREG programmes tools to develop alternatives to dominant trends of concentration in a few areas in Europe and, as a consequence, increased territorial imbalances.
- The changing geography of functional patterns and influence areas also implies that there is a need to position territories in their spatial context, rather than

analysing them as if they were insular entities. The increase of the interdependences between cities makes it relevant to focus on the notion of local/regional 'internal' accessibility, rather than on accessibility at the European and national scales. This implies an approach of European integration which is not based on macro-scale patterns, but on the improvement of links between neighbouring communities. Such an approach connects well with the numerous concrete and small scale polycentric initiatives implemented within INTERREG programmes.

In relation to the theme of rural-urban relationships research issues meeting the needs of the INTERREG communities include:

- An analysis of the variety of flows between rural and urban areas and their changing nature. The typology of rural-urban relationships developed in the ESPON 1.1.2 project is based on rather static criteria. The actual balance in the relationships between rural and urban areas is reflected in a high degree by flows. Data on flows are difficult to come by and more than likely incomparable across Europe. A case study approach would therefore be necessary.
- In-depth analysis of some of the key issues of INTERREG cooperation. There is, for instance, a great interest in diversification strategies, the delivery of services and facilities or the accessibility of rural areas. In terms of these issues rural areas across Europe are constantly changing. In some areas diversification takes place while in other areas the economic base is becoming ever less varied. Possibly through a case study approach complemented by the collection of overall data (if available) it would be highly relevant to get a picture of such changes.

A research theme which would be relevant from the perspective of polycentric development as well as rural-urban relationships could focus on the performance of areas in terms of the Lisbon indicators. In order to explain the variances the collection of overall data could be supplemented by cases studies.

The research needs of the INTERREG community will also be influenced by the priorities and measures of the new programmes, currently being written, and the way they are



taken up by project initiators. One of the first steps in the design of a targeted ESPON2 programme could be the *analysis of the new (draft) programmes* in order to identify relevant research issues. The future ESPON2 programme should be flexible therefore to adapt to a changing and developing policy environment.

## 4.2 ESPON: Supporting European Territorial Cooperation

At present INTERREG and in the future ETC is the main European programme testing and applying new forms of territorial governance. Although the European Parliament and the Austrian Presidency has recently agreed upon a rise in the budget allocated for ETC of 300 million EUR the budget is nevertheless smaller than originally proposed by the European Commission. During the budget negotiations the future of transnational cooperation has been questioned. This has led to quite a small budget for this form of cooperation. In the years ahead it is therefore necessary to demonstrate the added value of transnational and interregional cooperation more clearly (cross-border cooperation was never seriously questioned). ESPON could support this, possible in cooperation with a future INTERACT Programme, through dedicated research projects focusing in particular on the following issues:

- *Guidance for transnational learning and disseminating best practice* as these are key issues of transnational and interregional cooperation.
- The *impact of strategies* to stimulate more balanced rural-urban relationships and polycentric development. Many projects are based on certain *assumptions/untested hypotheses*. There is a great need to know under what conditions such a strategy might work and whether (INTERREG/ETC) projects could tip the balance. Main examples coming out of our research and going beyond the capacities of INTERREG project stakeholders are:
  - The role of small and medium-sized cities and Functional Urban Areas in social and economic development and service delivery at the regional level, especially in weak areas and/or thinly populated areas;
  - The various ways complementarity between nearby cities can be stimulated ('morphological polycentricity') and the conditions under which this can lead to social and economic development at the regional level: Does

complementarity really work or is it just wishful thinking?

- The conditions under which strategies for agricultural and economic diversification and improvement of the business environment have success.
- The *most promising strategies* (priorities, measures, project types) looking at the typology of areas in terms of rural-urban characteristics and the various levels of scales and their interrelations in terms of polycentricity (for the latter point see immediately below).
- The *interrelationships* between polycentricity and rural-urban relationships. An obvious common theme is the role played by small and medium-sized cities in social and economic development and service provision.

But this is not the only theme which links both issues of polycentricity and rural-urban relationships. Other themes include the role played by open spaces, landscape and nature reserves in urban development. Can cities function properly without such areas and spaces and, if not, which role do they play? Is it possible to capitalise these role as the maintenance and preservation of open spaces, nature and landscape is not self-evident?

## 4.3 European Territorial Cooperation

If future programmes are to become more focussed on rural-urban relationships and polycentric development in the European territory than the current INTERREG programmes, the added value of both concepts has to be communicated more widely and intensively.

A conclusion drawn by the project team is that rural-urban relationships and – to a lesser degree – polycentricity are often difficult to recognise when reading and interpreting the Operational Programmes, especially the INTERREG IIIB programmes. The same counts, at the project level, for rural-urban relationships and to a lesser degree also for polycentricity. If polycentricity and rural-urban relationships are indeed important issues when it comes to the future of the European territory as the European Spatial Development Perspective claims then these concepts should be taken up in project applications on a much wider base when compared with the past and present. We think that both concepts have stimulated many stakeholders at local and regional levels to define what they think are there endogenous potentials and what they think constitutes their territorial capital. Both polycentricity and rural-urban



relationships brings the abstract notion of territorial cohesion from the EU level downwards, although several policy strategies are based upon untested hypotheses (see above).

Key EU documents like the 'Community Strategic Guidelines 2007-2013' and the structural funds regulations (General Regulation; ERDF Regulation) are silent on polycentricity and rural-urban relationships though. These documents do not explicitly mention polycentricity, polycentric urban development or rural-urban relationships. Nonetheless, polycentricity and urban-rural are themes of relevance for the three priorities of future cohesion policies:

- Improving the attractiveness of Member States, regions and cities by improving accessibility, ensuring adequate quality and level of services, and preserving their environmental potential.
- Encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship and the growth of the knowledge economy by research and innovation capacities, including new information and communication technologies.
- Creating more and better jobs by attracting more people into employment or entrepreneurial activity, improving adaptability of workers and enterprises and increasing investment in human capital.

Regarding the first priority, the achievement of a more balanced urban system and system of rural-urban relationships across Europe implies that small and medium-sized towns would concentrate an increased proportion of the population and wealth production in Europe, and increase their attractiveness as living environments and as territorial contexts for entrepreneurship. Such a more balanced urban system can reduce the demographic pressure on the main metropolises and reduce levels of traffic congestion, thereby improving the urban living environment. At the same time small and medium-sized cities fulfil important functions in relation to the economic, social and demographic viability of Europe's rural areas. The variety of amenities provided by rural areas is of crucial importance for the environmental and territorial quality of the EU as a whole.

Polycentricity and managing rural-urban relationships are also connected to policies designed to spur innovation, entrepreneurship and growth initiatives. Indeed, as shown by previous descriptions of INTERREG projects, polycentricity

and the management of rural-urban relationships is often implemented at the local level by means of capacity building initiatives, enabling local actors to take advantage of local potentials and leading to increased endogenous development. The rationale behind polycentric development at the regional scale is often that wider, polycentric networks of cities would have more diversified economic profiles, and that their different components would therefore mutually benefit from each other's culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

Finally, the integration of labour markets is at the heart of both the concepts of polycentricity and rural-urban relationships. Integration of labour markets at different scales, for instance at the cross-border scale, can level out possible mismatches between labour demand and supply. Wider, integrated labour markets are furthermore more robust when faced with economic fluctuations.

Just as the 'Community Strategic Guidelines 2007-2013' and the structural funds regulations, the National Strategic Reference Framework documents do not explicitly mention polycentricity, polycentric urban development or rural-urban relationships. The added value of polycentricity and rural-urban relationships will have to be brought to the foreground in other ways, for instance through ESPON and INTERACT. It should be made clear in what way polycentricity and rural-urban relationships meet the three main guidelines for the future cohesion policy and especially the wider aim of balanced development. This is especially challenging for projects focussing on territorial issues like the spatial structure of cities and urban regions (including rural-urban relationships) or issues related to consumption and amenities like natural and cultural heritage, landscape or open space. Such issues are surely not forming a kind of territorial luxury with no decisive economic impact in terms of the Lisbon strategy but, instead, are essential ingredients of territorial capital and as such indispensable in every policy strategy.

Despite few references to polycentricity or rural-urban relationships in recent EU documents of relevance to European Territorial Cooperation, the concepts of polycentricity or rural-urban relationships have appeared in various draft ETC Programming Documents. This means that the opportunity for new projects concerning polycentricity or rural-urban relationships in many programming areas

remains in place. In the North Sea Region, for example (see text box), one of the three priorities in the draft operational programme is ‘unlocking the innovative potential of sus-

tainable communities’ whose objectives give clear opportunity for future projects concerning polycentricity or rural-urban relationships.

#### **Draft Objectives for Priority 1 (‘unlocking the innovative potential of sustainable communities’) of the North Sea Region Operational Programme**

- To promote place-based sustainable development of communities in the North Sea region.
- To integrate regions, foster networks of cities and towns and build links with rural, coastal and peripheral areas and between them in order to strengthen their functional complementarity and utilise the regional endogenous potential.
- To improve the practice of governance, community engagement and capacity building in different levels and contexts for managing sustainable communities.

#### **4.4 Common understanding of polycentricity**

There is potential ground for a common understanding on polycentricity between INTERREG and ESPON. However, ESPON results on the dimensions of polycentric development are not yet fully absorbed within the INTERREG communities. The main challenges are:

- In many cases it is often not clear whether or how INTERREG projects contribute to European polycentric development despite polycentricity being central to these projects.
- The terminology developed in ESPON in combination with the awareness also developed in ESPON that there are interrelationships and contradictions between developments at different levels of scales have not yet reached INTERREG cooperation in full.
- There are few INTERREG projects involving the largest metropolitan areas of Europe (i.e. the main EU capital cities).

The project team has not found large gaps between the topics and dimensions addressed in the INTERREG projects and the main conclusions and policy recommendations that were made in the ESPON project on polycentricity (ESPON 1.1.1). In that sense, it seems that the research oriented programme (ESPON) and the policy-related programme (INTERREG) do share a potential ground for common understanding over the notion of polycentricity.

As stated earlier in the report, all three geographical scales (micro, meso and macro) have been handled by INTERREG projects, although with different focus (i.e. the three topics of spatial structure, balanced economic development and governance systems). In that sense, the interpretation and application of polycentricity can be seen as in line with the ESPON 1.1.1. policy recommendations, which had different subjects of investigation for each of the three geographical scales.

For the INTERREG projects, the typical distribution of topics at each territorial scale could be summarised as follows:

Micro: Governance issues (multi-level governance) and potential for endogenous development; development of spatial development tools for regional/local development; Development of Polycentric Urban regions.

Meso: Transnational spatial integration of metropolises and second tier cities; networks of innovation and competence centres.

Macro: Global (European) economic integration around metropolises.

The topics mentioned above are in line with the policy issues and recommendations identified by the ESPON 1.1.1. project for each scale. However, the analytical tools developed by ESPON could be usefully applied to facilitate

the further development of current INTERREG projects and the design of new ones. This however implies an a priori communication between relevant European Territorial Cooperation projects and future ESPON project teams dealing with polycentricity, in order to basic common understanding of concepts and methodologies. As ESPON2 and European Territorial Cooperation will be launched in parallel, the initial dialogue will have to involve pre-existing polycentric INTERREG III projects.

It cannot be expected from European Territorial Cooperation programme to deal with possible incoherencies between polycentric development initiatives at all three main scales (micro, meso and macro), as each programme deals with a specific area and scale. Furthermore, transnational projects that promote more polycentric structure at the regional scale and apprehend polycentricity as an integrated local process, will not be integrated in a more general strategic thinking at scale of the transnational programme area. The link between the European and the regional levels is therefore not dealt with explicitly.

Another geographical scale that is understandably often not dealt with in INTERREG projects is the national dimension, as the projects are based on trans-national cooperation of regions/cities. It is nonetheless relevant to confront the strategies of polycentric development pursued within INTERREG projects and the predominant development perspectives implemented by the national spheres.

One of the main points stressed by the ESPON 1.1.1 project was that the application of polycentricity leads to contradictory results at different scales if the concept is approached in a mechanical and uniform sense. We have however in the current report described possible alternative visions of polycentricity, especially by opposing the morphological and relational perspectives. Such alternatives allow for the design European polycentric development perspectives that are differentiated according to territorial contexts, and that allow for a general coherence at all scales. The examination of INTERREG projects shows that they are implementing a variety of polycentric approaches, which would need to be better incorporated in European spatial development documents.

The present review of polycentric INTERREG projects shows that major metropolitan areas are generally not

inclined to cooperate. The ESDP focus on creating Global Integration Zone therefore cannot be addressed simply by encouraging MEGA cities to join forces. A possible more favourable path to follow is to organise the integration between major metropolitan regions by encouraging their secondary nodes to cooperate. This is already a significant theme in a number of INTERREG projects, but the potentials of such cooperation for the metropolitan regions as a whole can probably be further exploited.

The added-value of ESPON for the regions involved in INTERREG partnerships and for promoting stronger integration and a stronger emphasis on the cross-border dimension through European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) is multifaceted. ESPON first and foremost provides the basis for a territorial benchmarking of the regions. Indeed, the ESPON scientific findings and results can be of strong interest for the regions in order to assess their relative position in a wider geographical context, in Europe as a whole or within specific macro-regions. This territorial benchmark can also help designing INTERREG partnerships, by identifying other European regions faced with similar problems, socio-economic preconditions or complementary profiles. In this way ESPON can improve the regions' *'capacity to adapt to the particular needs and characteristics of specific geographical challenges and opportunities'* promoted by Community Strategic Guidelines.

#### **4.5 Common understanding of urban-rural relationships**

There is potential ground for a common understanding of rural-urban relationships between INTERREG and ESPON. Up to a certain level there are even communalities in efforts to make the concept of rural-urban relationships more tangible. The difference though is that researchers are trained to use complicated notions in their vocabulary while this is less the case in (INTERREG) politics. We have even found evidence that it was difficult to find political interest in (draft) projects if the outline of these projects was not framed in a vocabulary which could be linked to political issues.

Seen from this perspective (i.e. an understandable political vocabulary) it should not come as a surprise that on the whole the issue of rural-urban relationships remains rather implicit in INTERREG projects and (some) INTERREG Operational Programmes. The focus of many projects is

formulated in terms of urban or rural issues and the development of urban or rural areas. We have widened the circle of relevant projects to include those projects which have a clear rural-urban dimension, even though this is not always explicit.

Having said that: There are big similarities in the thematic content of INTERREG projects and the way rural-urban relationships are understood in ESPON. The resemblance between the six themes we have identified as being the object of INTERREG projects and the various sorts of rural-urban relationships as identified in ESPON is rather big.

The resemblance even counts for the issues not covered by either ESPON or INTERREG. These issues are related to flows. Project initiators and stakeholders found flows as difficult to approach and treat as researchers. Certain flows are almost absent in INTERREG cooperation in the field of rural-urban relationships. Water flows form an example here. Water management is indeed an issue in INTERREG cooperation but this issue is on the whole not framed in terms of rural-urban relationships. The same counts for the production of drinking water.

ESPON research and INTERREG cooperation are showing some resemblances, but also some differences. The ESPON programme is pursuing a so called three level approach: A macro level (EU), a meso level (transnational and national) and a micro level (regional and local). Rural-urban projects are by nature situated on the micro level. This means that the territorial links between sub-projects is of less importance. With the exception of partners in (cross-border) INTERREG IIIA projects partners form alliances not because of intrinsic territorial relationships but because they expect to learn from each other. They do not have to be neighbours. This is generally described as applying a wide definition of transnationality, not limited to issues which intrinsically connects and integrate areas.

Without in-depth case research it is difficult to assess whether INTERREG cooperation indeed is leading to widespread transnational learning. The use of project websites is an indication that this learning ambition is taken seriously although the use of internet as a tool is not evenly spread over Europe: Several programme areas and many projects are not accessible to the outside world in an easy way.

Looking at the map of Europe and the spatial distribution of INTERREG projects we have been able to identify several patterns and gaps. In some cases projects on certain issues tend to cluster, as is the case with the governance theme for instance. We have recorded the small number of INTERREG IIIB and IIIC projects in the new Member States and the accession countries. This forms a great challenge for the years ahead.

The same counts for the almost absence of INTERREG cooperation in the field of rural-urban relationships in the larger FUAs (Functional Urban Areas) and MEGAs (Metropolitan European Growth Areas). Some large cities participate in projects, like Hamburg in the INTERREG IIIB URBAL Development project (see Annex 2 under the governance theme for a brief description of this project). But this is rather exceptional. In contrast: There are many projects in which small and medium-sized cities participate. Getting the large cities of Europe involved in territorial cooperation on rural-urban issues is thus a great challenge for the period 2007-13. In this way there is a resemblance between both themes: Polycentricity as well as rural-urban relationships.

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## Annex 1: INTERREG projects on polycentric urban development<sup>12</sup>

### Theme Spatial/Functional Structure of the territory

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIA</b> <b>Oresund</b> <b>Region</b>	Øre-Sund-Bo – Living possibilities in the Øresund Region	The purpose of the project is to contribute to a more integrated and well-functioning region by encouraging a positive increase in population in the outer areas of the region. The project wants to make it more attractive to live outside the main cities in the region and show some of the positive sides of living in less populated areas. The project is a cooperation with a number of municipalities in the region, by strengthening their cooperation and exchanging ideas and experiences the project hopes to achieve better marketing tools, better planning instruments and increased competence among the employees in the municipalities. The project will start a number of local projects to test some of their ideas and new marketing strategies.
<b>IIIA</b> <b>PAMINA</b>	Multimodal traffic study in the region upper Rhine	The project aims at producing a study on multimodal transport in the Upper Rhine region, in three phases. The first phase has been performed in the framework of INTERREG II. The INTERREG III project focuses on the two last phases: 1) Conception and comparison of the scenarios: Analyse the strategies possible complementarities between the transport systems, and test these complementarities thanks to the definition and evaluation of prospective scenarios; 2) Proposition for action: Suggest recommendations in a cross-border perspective, in order to answer the future demand for transport of goods and persons.
<b>IIIA</b> <b>France – Italy</b> <b>(ALCOTRA)</b>	<b>SITRALP</b> - Transport integration strategies between the Savoie and the Aosta Valley	The project examines the possibility to integrate the public transport systems across the border. - Integrate and put in synergy actions, plans and investments for the multi- and intermodality of transport - Make the international road connection network more efficient and functional, especially the conception for the realisation of ‘intermodal nodes’ along the Mont Blanc axis - Reduce the impact of the traffic at the local level by developing local strategies by supporting public transportation and on the reduction of private car use.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Baltic Sea</b> <b>Region</b>	<b>Via Baltica Nordica</b> <b>Development Zone</b> <a href="http://www.viabalticanordica.net">www.viabalticanordica.net</a>	The VBNDZ has been partly set up along the Pan-European corridor that links Finland to the CEEC. The project is intending to ‘contribute to a more polycentric spatial development’. The idea of the project is to develop the Via Baltica road/rail connection but also to enable its regions to develop by transnational cooperation.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Baltic Sea</b> <b>Region</b>	<b>The Baltic Palette II</b> <a href="http://www.balticpalette.com">www.balticpalette.com</a>	Network constituted of the metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Helsinki, Riga, Tallinn and St Petersburg. The main objectives are to promote polycentric urban structures in these metropolitan regions, especially by improving infrastructure and communications, and to improve accessibility between the metropolitan regions. The main actions are seeking to improve the integration of the regional transportation and land-use systems, to develop specific economic profiles for the regional sub-centres and to identify the complementarities between them.

<sup>12</sup> This appendix and appendix 2 has been made on the basis of ESPON-INTERACT databases of INTERREG projects, in combination with the INTERREG IIIC project database (<http://www.interreg3c.net>).



Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB Atlantic Area</b>	<b>SDEA:</b> Study for the development of a polycentric development of the Atlantic Space <a href="http://arcatlantique.org">http://arcatlantique.org</a>	The project aims to form a locally-focused vision of polycentric development in the Atlantic Area. The polycentric model finds its justification in the framework of a strategy to control the disparities in development between industrial ports and inland areas, the latter being characterised by farming. The project deals with the following problem areas: - Regions and the dynamics of relationships between them – Systems of production and innovation - Transport, especially intermodal - The administrative system of each region.
<b>IIIB CADSES</b>	<b>REPUS:</b> Strategy for a Regional Polycentric Urban System in Central-Eastern Europe Economic Integrating Zone	This project is focused on the new Member States and addresses the problems of a more balanced and sustainable urban development, for building a Regional Polycentric Urban System (RePUS) that could contribute to strength an emerging Potential Economic Integrating Zone (PEIZ) in Central-Eastern Europe (CEE) based on Medium-Small-Cities in a regional development perspective.
<b>IIIB CADSES</b>	<b>RIMED:</b> Regional Integration and Metropolitan Development of South Eastern Europe <a href="http://www.seed-center.org/rimed/en_index.html">http://www.seed-center.org/rimed/en_index.html</a>	Network constituted of the large towns of Tirana, Skopje, Sofia and Thessalonica. The main objectives are to increase the integration between the urban regions, to reduce the fragmentation of the overall south-east Europe and to promote polycentric urban development based on networks of cooperation among cities.
<b>IIIB CADSES</b>	<b>SIC!:</b> Sustrain Implement Corridor <a href="http://www.sustrain-ic.net">www.sustrain-ic.net</a>	The SIC! Corresponds to the region along the Pan-European Corridor IV, following the capitals Berlin – Prague – Vienna – Bratislava. Its objective is to foster the development of a spatial integrated zone, like the ‘Blue Banana’ and to position the area’s regions strategically within the Enlarged EU. The project is especially focusing on the improvement of transnational accessibility, by linking the area’s agglomerations.
<b>IIIB CADSES</b>	<b>VITAL CITIES:</b> Consolidation of Polycentric Urban Systems through the Promotion of the Settlement of Retail Trade Businesses in Inner Urban Areas <a href="http://www.vital-cities.net">www.vital-cities.net</a>	The project aims to strengthen polycentric urban systems and to contribute to regional development in the CADSES area. In the framework of this project, the strengthening of polycentric urban systems is performed through the promotion of localisation of retail centres in city centres. The revitalisation of the inner parts of the city is intending to counteract the process of excessive suburbanisation.
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>POLYNET:</b> Sustainable Management of European Polycentric Mega-City Regions <a href="http://www.youngfoundation.org.uk/index.php?p=47">http://www.youngfoundation.org.uk/index.php?p=47</a>	The study object of the POLYNET project is the Mega-City regions of north-west Europe (London, Paris, Amsterdam, Frankfurt...). The project intends to provide a better understanding of the relations between functional (flows, communications...) and spatial (distribution of people/jobs) patterns inside these Mega-city regions.
<b>IIIB Baltic Sea Region</b>	<b>Metropolitan Areas+:</b> Network of Regional Systems of metropolises in the Baltic Sea Region <a href="http://www.metropolitan-areas.net">www.metropolitan-areas.net</a>	One of the project’s objectives is to promote a sustainable balance of interests, functions and resources within the metropolitan areas. It also stresses the need to include the relations between various centres in a polycentric structure, such as inter-regional travel nodes– airports, ferry ports and railway stations. One important perspective is the development of strategies of key sites within the polycentric regions, thereby enhancing the region’s attractiveness as a place for living and investments.



Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>HST Connect</b> (HST4i project) <a href="http://www.hstconnect.net">www.hstconnect.net</a>	The project starts with the analysis that High speed transport holds a key role in promoting balanced spatial development across north-west Europe. Therefore any attempt to improve HST needs to be worked out on a transnational basis. The project thus aims at the optimal and more efficient spatial and economic use of the evolving HST Network to benefit the regions involved. The main objectives of the HST4i project are to investigate the potential for development around the HST stations areas, to promote a complementary polynuclear backbone of north-west Europe and to serve the local needs and perspectives for development. The project intends to deliver strategies for the development of the HST nodes.
<b>IIIC South</b>	<b>PolyMETREX Plus</b> <a href="http://www.eurometrex.org">www.eurometrex.org</a>	The project is proposing to develop the key strategic policy options of the ESDP of Global Integration Zones, Polycentricity and Complementarity, applied to the metropolitan level. The overall objective is to contribute to effective polycentric relationships, based on complementarity and cooperation between metropolitan areas. The outputs will serve as a basis to promote a polycentric metropolitan Europe.

## Theme Economic development

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIA Finland – Estonia</b>	<b>Helsinki-Tallinn Science Twin City</b> <a href="http://www.euregio-heltal.org">www.euregio-heltal.org</a>	The project is a part of the EUREGIO Helsinki-Tallinn cooperation and the Science Twin City priority. The aim is to increase competitiveness of the two capitals in international high-tech business in three sectors: Biomedicine and biotechnology, ICT and material sciences (incl. new technologies). Activities include studies and analyses, brokerage events for actors in the three high-tech sectors, surveys on supply of office, laboratory and other facilities and science park services, as well as joint efforts in R&D and innovation marketing. Target areas: Uusimaa region and the Helsinki metropolitan area (Finland) and Harjumaa region and Tallinn metropolitan area (Estonia).
<b>IIIA Austria - Hungary</b>	<b>JORDES+</b> : Joint regional development Strategy for the Vienna - Bratislava - Gyoer region <a href="http://www.pgo.wien.at/projekte/f_JORDES.htm">www.pgo.wien.at/projekte/f_</a> JORDES.htm	Project description and objectives: The geographical situation of the JORDES region is unique in Europe and holds large development opportunities. Close together live about 4 million people in three countries, which until now hardly have cooperated. The entry of Slovakia and Hungary to the European Union, preceded by cooperation on government level, circulations of important technologies as well as the programmes INTERREG IIIA and PHARE CBC, gave birth to the development of the JORDES idea. By purposeful acting in the region it can be converted to a growth pool of European importance. JORDES+ is to make two substantial contributions to this: To set the change process in course and to protect the public interests. JORDES+ aims at setting up a common development strategy for the region Vienna - Bratislava - Gyoer. At completion the project aims at having produced substantial components for the development of a regional planning and project development strategy, which can be coordinated and accepted between the partners and the political organs in the region. Hopefully this can lead to the development of the region into an internationally positioned growth region.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIA</b> <b>Oresund</b> <b>Region</b>	A cross-border labour market	An integrated labour market gives a number of unique economical and social possibilities, like a broader recruitment foundation for employers, an improved exploitation of the resources of the labour force as well as increased choice possibilities for employees. Through the project knowledge will be gathered about the conditions for developing an integrated labour market.
<b>IIIA</b> <b>Adriatic New</b> <b>Neighbour-</b> <b>hood</b> <b>Programme</b>	<b>SVILMA:</b> Development of the Adriatic Labour Market <a href="http://www.svilma.net">www.svilma.net</a>	The project deals with the main topics of development, cooperation and integration in the employment field in the cross-border Adriatic area. It aims creating an integrated labour market and at the management of migration flows among these territories. The foreseen actions concern: A system of professional training and mobility modules for operators of services for occupation, the Observatory on the cross-border Labour Market, an integrated Partnership Resources Centre with the development of the institutional network among operators, the creation of an Adriatic Labour Fair containing the regional data base with potential labour demand and supply, integrated with the labour Information system.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Atlantic Area</b>	<b>MNAA:</b> Excellence Centres of Materials to the economic development of the Atlantic space <a href="http://www.mnaa.org">www.mnaa.org</a>	The project aims to improve the long-term competitiveness of the Atlantic Area by strengthening skills, research, innovation and technology transfer, based on a network of centres acting as specialised competence centres (for instance, in nanotechnology). The centres of excellence would serve as focal point for further cluster development and act as engine for economic growth and quality employment in the region.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Atlantic Area</b>	<b>CINCO:</b> Centres of Innovation and Competitiveness	CINCO is intended to energise the 'fabric of innovation' of SMEs, which are the principal sources of employment and wealth in the European space. Thanks to the training of directors and managers in these enterprises, the project aims to develop a true culture of innovation. Furthermore, CINCO will develop and train 'Agents of innovation', who will carry out audits of enterprises in order to evaluate their level of innovation, and who will promote innovation by working with the economic agents involved.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Baltic Sea</b> <b>Region</b>	<b>BaltMet Inno:</b> Baltic Metropolises Innovation Strategy <a href="http://www.baltmet.org">www.baltmet.org</a>	The project is a joint initiative on innovation between the major cities in the Baltic Sea Region. The aim is to strengthen the role of cities as developers of innovation environments at local, regional, national and international levels, based on a common innovation policy framework.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Baltic Sea</b> <b>Region</b>	<b>COINCO:</b> Corridor of Innovation and Cooperation <a href="http://www.coinco.nu">www.coinco.nu</a>	The project is intending to increase the competitiveness of the COINCO area (southern Scandinavia and northern Germany to Berlin). Improvement of the internal and external accessibility of this territorial unit is seen as a pre-requisite. The focus on innovation is promoting clustering between cross-border regions.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Baltic Sea</b> <b>Region</b>	<b>NECL:</b> North East Cargo Link <a href="http://www.necl.se">www.necl.se</a>	The project is intending to improve the accessibility of the mid-Nordic regions in terms of goods flows to global markets. The industrial specialisation of the mid-Nordic regions to manufacturing, resource-intensive industries stresses the need for improving the connectivity, both for imports and exports, to larger international markets. The project's aim is to develop a coherent economic-related strategy.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>CADSES</b>	<b>TECPARKNET:</b> Science and technology park cooperation in EU-Future Region <a href="http://www.tec-park.net">www.tec-park.net</a>	The key objective of the project is to establish the EU-Future Region (across Austria, Italy, Slovenia, Hungary and Croatia) as an attractive and competitive European region, rooted in the knowledge economy. Networking innovation centres, business centres and High-Tech-related companies is at the heart of the project, intending to improve the economic integration within the whole area.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB CADSES</b>	<b>TECNOMAN perspectives:</b> TEN and Corridor Nodes Management Network-perspectives <a href="http://www.tecnoman.net">www.tecnoman.net</a>	TECNOMAN perspectives are aiming to elaborate demand-oriented business location policies for TEN and TINA node regions in CADSES. It was the objective of TECNOMAN to develop a cooperation network of TEN-Tr and TINA node regions in both EU Member States and accession countries in order to improve their possibilities of economic development by evolving the node competence in the individual regions. The development of node competence is primarily a task of urban and regional policy. In developing node competence, the coordination of all key actors poses a special challenge. It is expounded that a balanced development of the individual nodes will only be possible if the different service levels are reconciled instead of merely eliminating the differences in transport infrastructure.
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>NENSI:</b> North European Network for Service Incubators <a href="http://www.service-incubator.com">www.service-incubator.com</a>	A balanced and sustainable development is in particular achieved by strengthening economic and social development. Small and medium enterprises (SME's) can be indicated as one of core elements of achieving a balanced and sustainable spatial-economic development within individual regions and as such in the EU as total. Also direct impacts on the competitiveness of the (NWE) region in total, revitalisation of declining and old city centres and brown fields in towns and cities, expansion and fortification of the NWE economical core area, strong impacts on employment rates, development of a network economy and urban networks.
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>A.T.I.:</b> Attractivity of the Territory and Innovation: The medium-sized cities <a href="http://www.pau.cci.fr/ati.htm">http://www.pau.cci.fr/ati.htm</a>	The project is proposing to focus on the development of medium-sized towns by confronting their positioning in the global economic development processes. The objective is thus to seek the parameters of their identity and to increase the potential of attractiveness of their territory. At stake is the production of new wealth by ways of adaptation of specific sectors. A specific objective is to enable the medium-sized towns to enter in an innovation network in order to polarise their resources and their potential for economic development. In the long run, the project intends to operationalise a trans-regional network of medium-sized towns on innovation.
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>INNOCOOP</b> <a href="http://www.fade.es/innocoop/">www.fade.es/innocoop/</a>	The project holds the objective of promoting potentials for economic development and innovation in south-west Europe by organising and optimising the transnational transfer of knowledge between agents belonging to the system and by promoting cooperation between its actors.
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>CIUMED:</b> Polycentrism through the network of medium size cities <a href="http://www.ciumed.org">www.ciumed.org</a>	The main objective of the project is to contribute to the promotion, in south-western Europe, of a balanced polycentric system of cities, capable of transmitting to their hinterland the impulses of economic development and social well-being.
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>AVANTEC:</b> New ways to promote the cooperation between agents of innovation in the South-western Europe <a href="http://www.proyectoavantec.org">www.proyectoavantec.org</a>	The project intends to create stimulation for the greater cooperation of the centres of competence and enterprises in south-west Europe, in order to increase the region's economic prosperity and social welfare.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB Western Mediterranean</b>	<b>C2M:</b> Cooperation among Mediterranean Metropoles <a href="http://www.ins-med.org">www.ins-med.org</a>	The project pursues several objectives: First, to promote a coordinated strategy on the functions of metropolisation (urban marketing, great metropolitan infrastructures...), second, to increase the performance of the Western Mediterranean economic system and its competitiveness in order to develop a zone of economic integration, third, to strengthen the functional complementarities between the metropolises, and finally, to establish a platform for cooperation for metropolises that are traditionally competing each other.
<b>IIIC East Dresden</b>	<b>REVITAE:</b> Restructuring, Economic development and Vitalisation supported by Innovation and Technology-transfer Activities and the Extension of cooperation <a href="http://www.revitae.net">www.revitae.net</a>	The project intends to deal with the problem of restructuring economies in both old and new Member States of the EU, especially based on the SME. The main objectives of the project are to support the establishment of clusters and networks, to foster cooperation between innovation and technology centres, larger companies and SME and R&D organisations and to strengthen innovation processes.
<b>IIIC West Stuttgart</b>	<b>ENLoCC:</b> European Network of Logistics Competence Centres <a href="http://www.enlocc.net">www.enlocc.net</a>	The project proposes to develop a network of centres that have a strong specialisation in logistics. These nodes are particularly relevant for improving multi-modal transportation means. Logistics centres are of importance for regional development as they are acting as a link between the transport systems and the economic network of the regions.

## Theme Governance

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIA Ireland – Northern Ireland</b>	Community Networking and Development Project	This project has two strands: 1. It will provide grants for community groups to establish sustainable cross-border partnerships with the purpose of tackling joint projects/issues. 2. It will bring together local authorities and the community sector on a cross-border basis, to develop fully integrated cross-border strategic developments and services.
<b>IIIB Alpine Space</b>	<b>ALPCITY:</b> Local endogenous development and urban regeneration of small alpine towns <a href="http://www.alpcity.it">www.alpcity.it</a>	The project focuses on local development and urban regeneration of small alpine towns, often undergoing processes of economic decline. Those small towns are creating 'unsustainable islands of disparity' inside the Alpine Space, which impinges the balanced development of the region and the polycentric urban system of an area polarised on large metropolitan areas. The transnational approach (both vertical and horizontal coordination) advocated by the project is thus aiming at improve the potential for a polycentric urban system in the Alpine Space.
<b>IIIB Atlantic Area</b>	<b>REVITA:</b> Atlantic Strategy to the revitalisation of industrial areas <a href="http://www.sevillaglobal.es/revita/index.html.es.html">http://www.sevillaglobal.es/revita/index.html.es.html</a>	The main idea that underlies this Project is to draw tighter the cooperation relations in terms of industrial revitalisation among the Atlantic cities, opening fields of reflection which can facilitate the exchange of information and experiences as well as the mutual support and cooperation in this matter. Special importance is given to deepen the criteria of success for governing the industrial revitalisation actions. The Project deals with transnational solutions and working formulas which refer to Atlantic urban revitalisation and industrialisation considering always a double dimension: Urban realignment and rehabilitation (in other words: Plans to realign and rehabilitate Atlantic industrial areas); and Functional revitalisation of Atlantic industrial areas (new firms and activities).

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB Baltic Sea Region</b>	<b>MECIBS:</b> Medium Sized Cities in Dialogue around the Baltic Sea <a href="http://www.mecibs.dk">www.mecibs.dk</a>	The project is about the medium-sized cities in the BSR. They are lagging behind the capitals and many suffer from restructuring of their basic urban functions. The project establishes a cooperation and exchange of experiences on the one hand between cities and on the other between practice and research. The project is closely related to the VASAB initiatives, first and foremost the former INTERREG IIC project Urban Systems and Urban Networking in the Baltic Sea Region (USUN). USUN showed that a most crucial challenge of urban and regional development within the BSR is the development of the small and medium-sized cities outside the metropolitan areas.  One outcome of the project is to form recommendations for integrated strategies, vertically (local...national) and horizontally (economic, social, environmental).
<b>IIIB Baltic Sea Region</b>	<b>DEFRIS:</b> Development of First Division Regions <a href="http://webnews.textalk.com/se/article.php?id=175869">http://webnews.textalk.com/se/article.php?id=175869</a>	The project assumes that the global economic development processes have strengthened metropolitan regions at the expense of medium-sized (First Division Regions) and smaller regions. Depending on the territorial context of the FDR (i.e. within or without the sphere of influence of a metropolitan region), the project is aiming at formulating strategies for development. The project is thus focusing on finding offensive strategies and planning methods that can strengthen regions that do not have the market potential of the metropolitan regions.
<b>IIIB Baltic Sea Region</b>	<b>IC:</b> Innovation Circle <a href="http://www.innovationcircle.net">www.innovationcircle.net</a>	The project' starting analysis is that small towns in rural areas are undergoing strong structural and socio-economic changes due to their remote location from large cities or other growth centres. The project intends to focus on the revitalisation of these towns by helping the local authorities to 'build their competitiveness' by opening up to innovation. Innovation in the project is understood as 'creating value out of new ideas, new products, new services or new ways of doing things'. The project is also focusing on the training of local practitioners on the subjects of 'territorial development strategies', 'designing attractive towns and places' and 'changing culture of governance'.
<b>IIIB North Sea</b>	<b>Town-Net</b> <a href="http://www.town-net.nl">www.town-net.nl</a>	The projects main objective is to strengthen the participating regions as a whole by stimulating development of each town's stronger areas, encouraging greater cooperation between towns, cities and regions without competitive overlap and resulting in differentiation and complementation. For doing so, the project intends to focus on the optimisation of public transport and improved integration between spatial planning and transport within town-networks, as well as greater development concentration of development at transport nodes.
<b>IIIB North Sea</b>	<b>VISP:</b> Vitalising City Centres through Integrated Spatial Planning <a href="http://www.vispnet.org">www.vispnet.org</a>	The VISP project focuses on a) the global processes of urban and economic change that are creating new challenges for all cities and towns, and b) future EU spatial policy responses that are looking to promote polycentric urban development as a means of achieving balanced and sustainable futures. The project intends to define a common approach to integrated spatial planning issues with the aim of revitalisation of the city centres. Integrative spatial planning practices needs to link functions, spaces and organisations, as well as citizens.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>NEWTASC:</b> New Towns as Sustainable Communities <a href="http://www.newtasc.com">www.newtasc.com</a>	The project is following multiple objectives: To ensure the future competitiveness and innovative development of new towns, to address the physical environment of new towns through transnational cooperation and to develop key transnational strategies and actions to address social cohesion and continued economic development of new towns.
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>EUROPOLIS:</b> Renewing the City, Monitoring and Focusing on Urban Growth <a href="http://www.europolis.equipement.gouv.fr">www.europolis.equipement.gouv.fr</a>	The project intends to constitute a platform for action for medium-sized towns and regulatory authorities at different levels. One key action for the project is to foster new city-centre dynamics and control over urban sprawl, for instance by integrating urban planning/transport strategies and controlling commercial urban planning.
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>BRAIN DRAIN</b> <a href="http://www.brain-drain.org">www.brain-drain.org</a>	The project intends to build a transnational network to find solution in order to reduce the brain drain from the peripheral regions in north-west Europe, by reinforcing their economic and spatial development potentials.
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>DART:</b> Development of Active and sustainable Regions <a href="http://www.interreg-dart.com">www.interreg-dart.com</a>	The overall aim of the project is to address structural weaknesses in rural regions of the EU, and to develop new strategic tools to increase their competitiveness. This objective intends to contribute to a more balanced pattern of growth between cities, towns and rural areas. The project focuses on regional economic development, especially tourism linked to low-cost air services.
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>SPAN:</b> Strategic Planning Action Network for Local Development <a href="http://www.span-eu.org">www.span-eu.org</a>	The project focuses on the development of participatory approaches to strategic territorial planning and multi-level governance. In each partner region, it includes both an academic and a practitioner partner.
<b>IIIB CADSES</b>	<b>POLY.DEV.:</b> Common best practices in spatial planning for the promotion of sustainable POLYcentric DEVELOPMENT <a href="http://www.polydev.org">www.polydev.org</a>	The project intends to investigate how the European spatial objectives (ESDP, CEMAT, ESPON) are fitting the current spatial planning practices and tools. The objective is to re-define and promote, at transnational level, a balanced polycentric development in the CADSES area by means of innovative spatial planning instruments and strategies. The project is aiming at increasing the skills and capacities of regional and local institutions to cope with these European objectives.
<b>IIIB Western Mediterranean</b>	<b>AMAT:</b> Workshops Regional planning <a href="http://www.ins-med.org">www.ins-med.org</a>	The project intends to be a forum of the exchange and analysis of the different regions' territorial policies. The analysis will particularly pinpoint the strategic elements in regional governance in terms of spatial development. The project will confront the needs of the regions as devolved actors of their own spatial development. The project intends to draw mutual benefits from the different interests of the regions, leading to a reduced fragmentation of the Western Mediterranean.
<b>IIIC Padova, Italy</b>	<b>URBE VIVA:</b> Building new models for the economic revitalisation of central urban areas <a href="http://www.urbeviva.net">www.urbeviva.net</a>	Based on the direct experiences of partner towns, the Project 'Urbe Viva' starts from the idea that public policies tackling city centre decline need to be planned, lead and promoted by a unique coordination body which should be the result of a steady public/private partnership.  Partners intend to stimulate at regional, national and EU level the research of new tools and policies for urban development, and specifically the activation of support instruments to finance pilot experiences of urban integrated management.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Summary</b>
<b>IIIC West Glasgow</b>	<b>InterMETREX</b> <a href="http://www.eurometrex.org">www.eurometrex.org</a>	The project pursues the objective of effective spatial planning and development at the metropolitan level in Europe, by promoting the necessary competence, capability and process. The project assumes that it is at the metropolitan level that the notion of integrated development can be considered most effectively. These considerations imply the need of integrated planning systems at the metropolitan scale.
<b>IIIC South Roma</b>	<b>ESDP Steps</b> <a href="http://www.regione.lazio.it">www.regione.lazio.it</a>	The project intends to focus on the capacity of spatial planning and urban management practices to implement, at the regional and local level, the objectives of the ESDP.



## Annex 2: INTERREG projects on rural-urban relationships

### Theme Economic and Social Development<sup>13</sup>

#### Sub-theme: Agricultural diversification

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB Atlantic Area</b>	<b>AGRO:</b> Cooperation and Valorisation of the Rural Patrimony <a href="http://www.adesper.com/agro/">www.adesper.com/agro/</a>	This project is related to the rural sector and to exploiting the resources native to each region to create a level of economic growth that allows improvement of living conditions in rural areas and creation of new SMEs to avoid the rural exodus. The project's strategic objectives are: Promoting coherence among the agricultural policies practiced at different levels in the Atlantic Area; promoting extensive traditional Atlantic agriculture, linked to the area's cultural heritage; studying the benefits of tourism and first-quality food products; promoting forestry practices that lead to sustainable job creation in rural areas through an energy evaluation of natural resources.
<b>IIIB CADSES</b>	<b>IRENE:</b> Innovative Rural Development Strategy Based On Local And Transnational Economical Networks	The main objective is 'promotion of structural change' and restructuring employment through the diversification of rural economy based on the setting up of local and transnational Multifunctional Economic Networks. 'MEN' stands for integration between rural enterprises and villages belonging to different economic sectors of a homogeneous rural area set up to overcome the structural difficulties (size, crop specialisation, etc.) every single enterprise faces in starting employment related multifunctional and development processes.
<b>IIIB CADSES</b>	<b>SIMOCA:</b> Setting up and implementation of sustainable and multifunctional rural development model based on organic and competitive agriculture <a href="http://www.simoca.org">www.simoca.org</a>	Consumers increasingly demand organic agricultural products. This creates a new market for agricultural products. Different studies prove that organic farming requires more labour and triggers off processes of diversification of economic activities (tourism, services, processing of agricultural products, etc...) that are integrated and enhanced by the image of 'natural' inherent to the concept of organic farm.
<b>IIIB Madeira- Azores- Canary Islands</b>	<b>VEREDAS:</b> Red Macaronésica para la Promoción de las Producciones Locales <a href="http://www.veredas.org">www.veredas.org</a>	Objetivo Global: Mejorar el conocimiento y la comercialización de las producciones locales respetando la perspectiva medioambiental y favoreciendo la igualdad entre hombres y mujeres en el medio rural.
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>AGROINTEC:</b> Promotion of agricultural enterprises, innovation and technologies Europe <a href="http://www.agrointec.com">www.agrointec.com</a>	AGROINTEC é um projecto que pretende promover empresas de inovação e de tecnologia agroalimentar do Sudoeste Europeu. Este projecto está estruturado em três eixos de acção que permitem estender a tecnologia ao Sector Agroalimentar do SUDOE.

<sup>13</sup> Three projects listed in the three tables below are serial projects which brings the total number of projects on economic and social development to 35.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>ECOVERGER:</b> Economic and environmental development of high stem plantations in the SUDOE <a href="http://www.solagro.org/site/162.html">www.solagro.org/site/162.html</a>	O objectivo do projecto é o de partilhar os conhecimentos técnicos e as experiências de diferentes parceiros com o fim de se elaborar uma estratégia comum de acções à escala do SUDOE, visando preservar de forma duradoura os pomares extensivos ao ar livre (porte elevado) e os sistemas agro-florestais tradicionais mistos (associação árvores-cultivos-animais). A valorização das produções extensivas responde aos desafios de ordenamento do território, ao permitir a estabilização das explorações agrícolas e a criação de empregos permanentes através da diversificação dos produtos (incluindo a actividade turística).
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>BIOFEP:</b> Comparison of organisation, production and commercialisation of biological animal products in France, Spain and Portugal <a href="http://www.biofep.org">www.biofep.org</a>	O projecto BIOFEP resulta de intercâmbios entre os parceiros sobre os problemas que gravitam em torno da agricultura biológica, particularmente em zonas desfavorecidas. O objectivo desta cooperação é o de obter um melhor conhecimento das potencialidades e dos constrangimentos ao desenvolvimento da Agricultura Biológica (A.B.), prioritariamente em zonas de montanha do Sudoeste Europeu (SUDOE), através da troca de informações, do “saber-fazer” técnico e da procura de soluções.
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>FESERPAE:</b> Creation of the South European Federation of local extensive pig varieties	Deste projecto resultará a criação da Federação Europeia das Raças Porcinas Autóctones Extensivas (FESERPAE). As três associações, representando as raças porcinas autóctones do Sudoeste (o porco Ibérico, o porco Gascon e o porco Alentejano) decidiram unir-se para proporcionar o intercâmbio de meios técnicos, científicos e de promoção para provocar uma sinergia e reforçar a capacidade de desenvolvimento mútuo.
<b>IIIB Western Mediterranean</b>	<b>GAPMEDOCC:</b> The taste and the peasant arts in the West Mediterranean <a href="http://www.gapmedocc.com">www.gapmedocc.com</a>	« GAPMEDOCC » s'intéresse au tourisme rural en Méditerranée et plus particulièrement aux arts paysans. Il s'agit d'offrir des produits et des services touristiques mieux adaptés aux demandes actuelles et complémentaires de l'offre littorale classique, pour développer un réseau de pôles de reconnaissance des arts paysans et ruraux ayant le « goût » comme élément de cohérence d'un art de vivre retrouvé.
<b>IIIB Western Mediterranean</b>	<b>REVPAR MEDOCC:</b> Network to valorise the rural inheritance <a href="http://www.reseau-revpar.org">www.reseau-revpar.org</a>	« Revpar Medocc » s'intéresse au patrimoine rural en Méditerranée. Il a pour objectif d'expérimenter simultanément, sur trois sites choisis par les partenaires du programme, une opération programmée de mise en valeur de ce patrimoine souvent oublié, car à l'écart des grandes concentrations urbaines et/ou touristiques, mais porteur d'une forte identité et d'une valeur ajoutée pour le développement de produits touristiques nouveaux. La mobilisation de moyens en terme d'animation, de formation, et d'organisation territoriale permettra de modéliser une méthode d'intervention qui pourra être transférée sur des territoires associés de l'espace Medocc.
<b>IIIC East</b>	<b>eFARMER:</b> Stimulating entrepreneurship competitiveness and regional development in rural areas <a href="http://www.efarmer.info">www.efarmer.info</a>	The overall objective of the operation is to share experiences and different approaches on ICT based rural development between regions from old and new EU Member States. It aims to create efficient tools for implementing EU policy directives for the agricultural sector in new Member State regions, in particular as regards agro-environmental programmes to support environmentally friendly farming practices.
<b>IIIC North</b>	<b>LOF:</b> Contributing to Sustainable Rural Development Through Sharing Experience and Building Capacity in Processing and Marketing of Local and Organic Food <a href="http://www.ceet.ee/lof">www.ceet.ee/lof</a>	The overall objective of LOF is to develop and promote local and organic food as instruments for supporting sustainable rural development. The partners aim to (1) develop the small-scale processing of local and organic food by farmers and other enterprises; (2) improve the direct marketing and increase the purchasing of local and organic food; and (3) to maintain and enhance the traditional local food culture.

## Sub-theme economic diversification

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIA</b> <b>Franco-British Programme Kent-Sussex/ Nord Pas de Calais- Picardie</b>	Development of a network of Rural businesses	Développement de réseaux d'entreprises rurales
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Baltic Sea Region</b>	<b>Four Corners:</b> South Baltic Four Corners - a Developing Region in the Centre of the Enlarged Europe <a href="http://www.four-corners.org">www.four-corners.org</a>	All project partners are rural areas with low-density population. They experience out migration, suffer from high unemployment, have few centres of knowledge and an ageing population. The main objective is to develop a new structure of economic life. SME's are the base on which the future development will be built. Many SME's have difficulties to find a sufficient economic base. The project is designed to support them in their endeavour to start transnational businesses.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>CADSES</b>	<b>EMBRACE:</b> Improving the Access of SMEs from Rural Regions to the Knowledge and Information Society <a href="http://www.e-embrace.net">www.e-embrace.net</a>	The project aims to design, develop and implement specific spatial development policies, initiatives and actions for the benefit of SMEs located in rural and undeveloped urban areas. Their access to knowledge and the information society should be increased. 'EMBRACE' intends to establish a pilot virtual network offering SMEs access to a wide range of business services and tools.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>CADSES</b>	<b>GOVERNET:</b> Governance models for sustainable integrated rural development and multifunctional agriculture	The main objective of the project is to promote sustainable development of rural areas within the context of a strong integration with other activities undertaken by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) located in rural areas, thus promoting a diversified economic structure and a social stable development.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Northern Periphery</b>	<b>Rural Business Women:</b> Developing Rural Woman's Entrepreneurship <a href="http://www.matkakori.net">www.matkakori.net</a>	The aim of the project is to focus on the development of the inhabitants and entrepreneurs in rural areas, especially women's small-scale entrepreneurs and tourism businesses in Northern Peripheral areas. All partner areas have high rates of female unemployment in common, as well as poor infrastructure, depopulation and many natural resources.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Northern Periphery</b>	<b>SCRI:</b> Structure for Commercialisation of Rural Innovation <b>SCRI In Action:</b> Follow up <a href="http://www.scri.eu.com">www.scri.eu.com</a>	This innovative project aims to exchange skills and experience between research institutions, academia and the public and private sectors, in order to create a more dynamic use of the skills that are used for the sustainable exploitation of innovative ideas. Mechanisms will be devised to improve access for companies to academic and public sector expertise, in order to improve competitiveness and regional attractiveness through exploitation of information systems technology, and the new networking business culture.
<b>IIIC</b> <b>North</b>	<b>EKIE:</b> Enhancing Knowledge Intensive Enterprises in Small Cities Surrounded by Rural and Sparsely Populated Areas <a href="http://www.ekie.net">www.ekie.net</a>	The overall objective is to develop new approaches for enhancing existing enterprises and starting new enterprises in areas with a low population density, with a special focus on technology knowledge intensive enterprises. EKIE focuses on Technology Parks, Public Economic Development Organisations & Incubating, R&D Activities and Higher Education.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIC North</b>	<b>TOOLS:</b> New strategies and tools for development of business environment in marginal rural areas <a href="http://www.toolsproject.ee">www.toolsproject.ee</a>	Marginal rural areas in Europe have experienced rapid structural changes over the last decade. Self-employment and micro and small businesses are an important engine of development and a key source of job creation in backward areas. TOOLS is to capitalise on the existing experience and expand the activities to new sectors and groups such as young people, women and unemployed persons by improving their opportunities for getting engaged in entrepreneurship.
<b>IIIC East</b>	<b>ENABLE:</b> ENABLing European Entrepreneurship <a href="http://www.kwf.at/enable">www.kwf.at/enable</a>	ENABLE is composed of regions that are distant from both national centres and the economic core of the EU. The overall objective is to improve the effectiveness of SME policies and increase the basis for entrepreneurship and innovation in the regions.
<b>IIIC West</b>	<b>PRAXIS:</b> Making Rural Entrepreneurship Work <a href="http://www.praxisnetwork.net">www.praxisnetwork.net</a>	PRAXIS Rural Entrepreneurship will expose all partners to new ideas and approaches to entrepreneurship in rural areas. The partnership will undertake and disseminate the results of a survey to investigate the experiences of PRAXIS partners in supporting rural businesses to successfully innovate and become more competitive.

### Sub-theme improving the quality of the business environment

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIA Spain-Portugal</b>	Rural centres of cultural innovation for cross-border cultural and educative exchanges	CRIEST SP2/ E25: Centros rurales de innovación educativa para intercambios educativos y culturales transfronterizos
<b>IIIA Spain-Portugal</b>	Endogenous development of cross-border rural centres based on strategies of sustainable development	RURAL TRANS / SP4.E43 / 02: Desarrollo endógeno de los núcleos rurales transfronterizos basado en estrategias de desarrollo sostenible.
<b>IIIB Atlantic Area</b>	<b>RURALTECH:</b> European Network to promote new technologies in rural territories	The RURALTECH project assumes that widening the use of the new technologies in the rural areas of the Atlantic Area is a strategic necessity of the first importance for promoting development which is territorially balanced among urban and rural areas of the Atlantic Area. RURALTECH seeks support the demand for and the supply of the new technologies by promoting their use.
<b>IIIB Atlantic Area</b>	<b>AGATE:</b> Agriculture / agglomeration Atlantic and territory <a href="http://www.arc-atlantique.chambagri.fr">www.arc-atlantique.chambagri.fr</a>	The AGATE project deals with the question of the structuring of the rural areas of the Atlantic Area, linking them coherently with the territories around them, and notably with urban networks. It is a question of participating in the structuring of the territory by means of the concerting of actors, the setting up of partnerships and the emergence of projects. The project accords great importance to the involvement of local actors, who participate on a daily basis in the development of their territory and who can therefore bring pertinent insights to the debate. AGATE plans to create some twenty think-tank groups made up of different local actors, supposed in particular to reflect on themes like 'the links among urban and rural zones' or 'the development of rural territories in the Atlantic Area'.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB Baltic Sea Region</b>	<b>IC: Innovation Circle</b> www.innovationcircle.net	The overall aim of the project is to stimulate innovation and sustainable development in rural districts and smaller and medium-sized towns in the Baltic Sea Region, to enhance competence about innovation strategies and EU policies through a transnational professional network and a tailored training program, which will serve as a common inter-sectoral platform for changing culture of governance, promote innovation and contribution to a polycentric development.
<b>IIIB Madeira- Azores- Canary Islands</b>	<b>ECORURAL:</b> Observatory of the Agrarian Reality www.ecorural.org	ECORURAL is a project that wants to articulate the actions tending to guarantee the sustainable development of the ultraperipheral regions. For this, we expect to create an observatory of the agrarian and rural reality, integrated by contents of high interest to the rural world of the ultraperipheral regions of Europe, since the planning of natural and territorial resources until their sustainability.
<b>IIIB Madeira- Azores- Canary Islands</b>	<b>NESOS I/II:</b> Cooperation for the Rural development in Macaronesia www.nesos.cmrup.org	NESOS is a program of cooperation in matters of rural development among associations of municipalities of Macaronesia. The main objective is the promotion of common actions of advising, coordination and promotion destined to the local authorities.
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>URGENCI/Network Urban - Rural:</b> Generating New Commitments between citizens www.urgenci.net	This network has been promoted in a non formal way by the participants of the First International Symposium (Aubagne last February 2005) and by the members who have mentioned their interest to it. The URGENCI network is of an absolutely open nature and aims to re-group a large number of actors from different countries, welcoming everyone willing to support CSA concept: Individual, organisms, consumers members of CSA, farmers, others. Join the network by showing your interest in the forum that will allow you to participate in the processes of network set up and the internet site construction.
<b>IIIB Western Mediterranean</b>	<b>RURAL MED:</b> Permanent Forum and network of centres to the rural development in the Mediterranean Follow up: <b>RURAL MED II</b> www.rural-med.org	Rural Med vise la création d'un réseau d'échange d'expériences et de coordination d'initiatives en matière de développement rural auquel participent les régions des rives nord et sud du Bassin méditerranéen. Ce réseau vise l'optimisation et la promotion des processus de développement rural participatif grâce à l'échange d'expériences, la diffusion des bonnes pratiques, la mise en oeuvre de programmes de formation et de diffusion conjoints, et l'exécution de projets communs.
<b>IIIC South</b>	<b>RURAL INNOVA:</b> Réseau d'échanges pour une politique régionale de développement rural innovante	The RURAL INNOVA project intends to build an interregional network to exchange good practices and transfer experiences in order to put non-agricultural rural development factors to better use, via four courses of action: Attracting new populations; Innovative economic activities; Essential services for the population.

## Theme Services and facilities

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Alpine Space</b>	<b>QUALIMA:</b> Quality of life improvement by supporting public and private services in the rural areas of the Alps <a href="http://www.qualima.org">www.qualima.org</a>	They suffer a huge loss of competitiveness due to demographic and economic phenomena that endangers the anthropomorphisation and the quality level of life in the rural mountain zones. In these areas public, sanitary and healthcare services, commercial activities are progressively disappearing. These services generally represent the last garrison to maintain an acceptable quality of life's levels and, by means of this, the conservation of the territory. The project proposes to carry out coordinated area systems which strengthen the existing structural and infra-structural networks matching them with human resources and territorial potentialities.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Alpine Space</b>	<b>PUSEMOR:</b> Public services in sparsely populated mountain regions - new needs and innovative strategies <a href="http://www.pusemor.net">www.pusemor.net</a>	The project aims at developing sustainable strategies and innovative solutions for improving the provision of sparsely populated mountain regions with public services. This with the ambition to grade up these regions both as economic place and as place of residence. The strategic dimension is concerned with the formulation of implementation-ready concepts and pilot projects. An important goal of the project is the elaboration of recommendations for public authorities/ policy makers.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Baltic Sea Region</b>	<b>Baltic Balance:</b> Integrated settlement structures <a href="http://www.balticbalance.se/">www.balticbalance.se/</a>	Rural districts and towns are in many aspects dependent on each other. They have different roles to give inputs, related to infrastructure, services and the labour market, to give better conditions for survival of a region. Instead of looking on each other as competitors for the resources available, it will often be more fruitful to use the advantages of both rural and urban areas for common use.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>CADES</b>	<b>REPUS:</b> Strategy for a Regional Polycentric Urban System in Central-Eastern Europe Economic Integrating Zone	This project is focused on the new Members countries and addresses the problems of a more balanced and sustainable urban development, for building a Regional Polycentric Urban System (RePUS) that could contribute to strength an emerging Potential Economic Integrating Zone (PEIZ) in Central-Eastern Europe (CEE) based on Medium-Small-Cities in a regional development perspective. The project will foresee the following objectives: 1) Identifying the potentialities of the regional urban systems including the functional roles and the urban hierarchy in the European spatial context; 2) Identifying the dynamic Medium-Small Cities that could play as potential regional capitals for developing new functional integrating areas; 3) Promoting the linkages between urban centres and rural areas, focusing on the role of the Small towns; 4) Promoting urban policy effectiveness improving the institutional policy capacity within the ongoing decentralisation process.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>North Sea</b>	<b>F4N:</b> Farmers for Nature <a href="http://www.farmersfornature.org">www.farmersfornature.org</a>	The project will identify new ways to manage and improve rural landscapes. It consists of a number of pilots addressing enhanced ecological value and preserved regional and cultural identity. Working with farmers and other stakeholders, this should still ensure sufficient economic opportunities for farmers.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Northern Periphery</b>	<b>ATSRuAR:</b> Ambulance Transport & Services in Rural Areas <a href="http://www.atsruar.net">www.atsruar.net</a>	The provision of pre-hospital services in northern rural areas can be challenging and problems exist due to long distances, isolation and sparse population. Thus, there is a need for a collaboration between actors in this field, in order to look for a model of 'best practice' in northern rural areas concerning access, vehicles, transport, distances, safety, use of technical equipments, competence and skills, economics, cost effectiveness, etc.



Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB Northern Periphery</b>	<b>Community Learning Networks</b> in Northern Periphery Areas - Phase II	This project aims to establish a Community Learning Network spanning the Northern Periphery areas and to address issues of access to learning and rural depopulation. The common denominator of all partners is that they are supporting learning in remote, sparsely populated areas, which in turn sustains the communities they serve.
<b>IIIB Northern Periphery</b>	<b>REMEDY:</b> Remote Telematic Solutions for patient diagnoses and training of health care professionals <a href="http://www.vannas.se/kommun/forvaltningar/vord-omsorg/MEMO/Utkast.htm">www.vannas.se/kommun/forvaltningar/vord-omsorg/MEMO/Utkast.htm</a>	The project aims to develop the practical use of tele-medical support within different disciplines of the health and medical services in sparsely populated and remote areas of the Northern Periphery.
<b>IIIB Northern Periphery</b>	<b>DESERVE:</b> Delivering Services in Remote and Rural Areas: A Transnational Exchange of Ideas and Practices <a href="http://www.nppdeserve.info">www.nppdeserve.info</a>	All the participating partners across the Northern Periphery region share concerns for the difficulties faced by service providers, as well as service users in remote and rural areas. The project seeks to establish the transferability of models of service delivery to remote and rural areas among the participating partner regions. Each participating region will implement a project in their native region.
<b>IIIB Northern Periphery</b>	<b>Sustainable Rural Health</b> care networks <a href="http://www.sustainable-health.org">www.sustainable-health.org</a>	Rural areas in the Northern Periphery face specific challenges with regard to the provision of high quality, coherent/integrated health services. This project will examine and pilot a number of approaches to address several different aspects of challenges to providing coherent, high quality health services to the population in the Northern Periphery.
<b>IIIB Northern Periphery</b>	<b>Small Town Networks</b> project 1 & 2 <a href="http://www.smalltownnetworks.com">www.smalltownnetworks.com</a>	A large proportion of the people in the Northern Periphery live in small towns and many of these communities are in long-term retreat. Building strong clusters of towns in remote fragile regions is a priority concern of the European Spatial Development Perspective but it requires a long-term commitment. The STN 2 project encourages the regeneration of networks of towns using 'bottom-up' planning and self-help. The STN 2 project places a greater emphasis on youth involvement
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>CIUMED:</b> Polycentrism through the network of medium size cities <a href="http://www.ciumed.org">www.ciumed.org</a>	The main objective is to contribute to the promotion, in south-western Europe, of a balanced polycentric system of cities capable of transmitting to all municipalities, no matter how small they may be, the impulses of economic development and social well-being. The aim is to improve the group of urban functions that are located there, namely through promoting, passing on information and fostering initiatives that will involve the urban areas as well as the rural areas with which they are linked to.
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>A.T.I.:</b> Attractivity of the Territory and Innovation: The medium-sized cities <a href="http://www.pau.cci.fr/ati.htm">www.pau.cci.fr/ati.htm</a>	Este projecto parte da hipótese que um território é tanto mais atractivo quanto mais elevado for o acolhimento de empresas inovadoras. Os parceiros vão centrar-se no desenvolvimento das cidades médias afirmando a sua posição no processo de desenvolvimento económico global e generalizado imposto pelos modelos económicos actuais. O objectivo do projecto é desenvolver as condições para a afirmação da identidade destas cidades médias e posicionar os seus territórios como territórios atractivos.



Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIC West</b>	<b>SusSET:</b> Sustaining Small Expanding Towns <a href="http://www.pau.cci.fr/ati.htm">www.pau.cci.fr/ati.htm</a>	In some EU countries, as many as 50% of the national population live in small towns making them important contributors to social cohesion. Policymaking at the national level tends to focus more on cities and remote rural areas, creating a policy gap. SusSET aims to create a framework or model which will better support small traditional, yet expanding towns in order to make them more competitive in the EU, and more generally to strengthen economic and social cohesion across Europe.

## Theme Transport, energy and information

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIA Ireland – Northern Ireland</b>	Cross Border Youth ICT Programme	This project will deliver a cross-border ICT development training programme connecting specified rural and urban areas from County Derry and County Sligo through the use of computer technology. The project will run over two years fostering relationships and stimulate an interest and awareness in the opportunities for career development within the ICT sector.
<b>IIIA Ireland – Wales</b>	<b>CARP:</b> Content and Access for Rural People <a href="http://www.tssg.org/archives/2006/06/carp_1.html">http://www.tssg.org/archives/2006/06/carp_1.html</a>	The aim of this project is to help rural communities in both regions to benefit from advances in information and communications technologies. The project enables selected community groups to exploit the use of ICTs to develop and provide high-speed broadband access and relevant content of interest to community members and organisations.
<b>IIIB Alpine Space</b>	<b>ANT:</b> ALPINETWORK <a href="http://www.alpinetwork.com">www.alpinetwork.com</a>	Information and communication technology (ICT) creates opportunities for rural areas to overcome their economic disadvantages. ANT coaches innovative IT pilot projects and implements transnational and intraregional networking, know-how transfer and education of 'local innovators'. The project activities are experimented with in pilot tele-centres. A socio-economic analysis will be conducted pre and post project. The above activities, comprehensive information about innovation and best practice are focused on raising awareness regarding the opportunities through ICT among the regional participants, SMEs, and in particular those re-entering the job market. ANT implicitly supports innovative work models in rural regions, thereby contributing to the creation of new and innovative work places as well as securing existing ones. The products will also be available transnationally after the project. ANT therefore makes a sustainable contribution to increasing the competitiveness of the participating regions.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Madeira-</b> <b>Azores-</b> <b>Canary</b> <b>Islands</b>	<b>INFOBAND:</b> Desarrollo y Fomento del Uso de las Redes de Banda Ancha en el Medio Rural a partir del Uso de Tecnologías Inalámbricas <a href="http://infoband.digitalislands.net">http://infoband.digitalislands.net</a>	Este proyecto pretende hacer uso de las posibilidades que ofrece la conexión de banda ancha por medio de tecnologías inalámbricas para fomentar el uso de servicios de valor añadido en estas áreas de la geografía insular. Partiendo de los esfuerzos que ya se están realizando en la ejecución del Programa Internet Rural, que contempla la mezcla de diferentes tecnologías de conexión para permitir llevar la banda ancha al medio rural, independientemente de que estas tecnologías tengan carácter de conexión por medio de cables o de forma inalámbrica. A partir de la creación de una serie de nodos, ya incluidos dentro del proyecto, se pretende ampliar el rango de cobertura de estas redes, así como la cantidad y calidad de servicios ofrecidos, de tal manera que puedan servir de plataforma para el fomento del uso de estas tecnologías en el medio rural.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Madeira-</b> <b>Azores-</b> <b>Canary</b> <b>Islands</b>	<b>PEBA:</b> Canarias, Spatial Bridge of Broadband	The objective of this project is the installation of a Node of Telecommunications of Broadband by Satellite in the province of Tenerife, concretely in the island of the Palm, with the purpose of solving the present disadvantages of access to the broadband in rural surroundings, solving the existing social differences between the countryside and urban areas. With this solution we try to collaborate with the development of the information Society in the countries of Macaronesia. Taking advantage (Cabo Verde, Azores, Madeira,...) and the bows that unite the Canary Islands with Latin America, with this Node of Telecommunications by satellite. It also tries to offer to the companies the necessary infrastructure for the Telecommunications services export and the contents developed in the countries before mentioned.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Northern</b> <b>Periphery</b>	<b>BIRRA:</b> Broadband in Remote and Rural Areas <a href="http://www.birraproject.net">www.birraproject.net</a>	Telecommunication and access to information society services are factors of great importance for the future development of the Northern Periphery. ICT helps to overcome certain disadvantages caused by long distances and peripheral locations characteristic of the NPP area. The BIRRA project recognises that there is great disparity across NPP regions and also internally between the availability of broadband and associated services in rural and urban areas. While each area is at a different stage of implementation of broadband, the challenges are similar. The project therefore involves a number of activities that aim to focus on learning best practice from the more advanced regions and identifying solutions relevant to the partners own regional requirements. Four countries are involved in the transnational exchange and transfer of experience in the field of broadband and information communications technology.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Western</b> <b>Mediterranean</b>	<b>REVER MED:</b> Telematic Instruments for innovating services of mobility and logistics for urban and périurbains spaces <a href="http://www.revermed.com">www.revermed.com</a>	«REVER MED» s'intéresse aux voies de communication au sein des espaces urbains et périurbains. Il a pour objectif principal de mettre en place un réseau de voies de communication autonomes destiné au transport non motorisé (donc non-polluant et respectueux de l'environnement). Ce réseau devrait ainsi être constitué principalement de voies vertes, de voies faisant partie du patrimoine culturel nature, et dans une moindre mesure d'autres types de chemins comme les chemins ruraux ou forestiers. On estime la longueur du réseau à plus de 10.000 km, du Portugal à l'Italie. Il sera basé sur la préservation du domaine public et la valorisation du patrimoine désaffecté constitué par les anciennes lignes de chemins de fer, les chemins de service des voies d'eau, les chemins de transhumance et les chemins agricoles, ainsi que sur la valorisation du patrimoine bâti et culturel qui y est attaché. Ce réseau sera spécialement lié aux sites Natura 2000.

## Theme Consumption and amenity

### Sub-theme rural tourism

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIA Ireland – Wales</b>	<b>TWIGS:</b> Tourism Wales and Ireland Green and Sustainable	This project aims to; -Facilitate the collaboration of agencies and communities in relevant INTERREG areas. -Achieve synergy in the development of quality green tourism. -Develop best practice in the development of authentic rural tourism. -To engage local communities in the development of quality green tourism. - Commission Market Research. -Form a action plan for green tourism. -To encourage tourism services to partake in green tourism and create action plans for the development of green.
<b>IIIA Oresund Region</b>	The willow country <a href="http://www.pilelandet.com">www.pilelandet.com</a>	The goal of the project is to strengthen solidarity and the identity as well as strengthening the attractiveness and tourism possibilities for rural areas close to the metropolitan region, in the southern part of the Oresund Region. The project will carry out a number of marketing activities, produce information material and a homepage that will focus on the attractions and sightseeing possibilities in the area.
<b>IIIA Euregio Karelia</b>	Incentive tourism as a product to Russian tourists <a href="http://kannustematkailu.pkky.fi">http://kannustematkailu.pkky.fi</a>	The project's target group consists of the region's rural tourism enterprises. The project's objectives are connected to the programme Framework for development of the region of North Karelia until 2006, the tourism cluster. The qualitative objectives of the project are based on supporting the region's expansive rural tourism enterprises in product development and marketing with regard to marketing in Russia as well as on providing information on development and construction know-how concerning farms and the environment. The project's quantitative objectives include increase in tourism income, increase in the number of overnights by the Russian as well as prolonging of the tourism season thanks to Russian tourists. The project aims at maintaining the present jobs as well as at creating eight new full/part-time jobs.
<b>IIIA France – Spain</b>	Rehabilitation of cross-border routes for hiking	La demande croissante en randonnée comme produit touristique a fait que depuis quelques années, un travail d'élaboration d'une offre touristique de qualité dans le territoire de l'Ariège, Val d'Aran et Pallars Sobira a commencé (création de randonnées, signalisation, diffusion). Ce produit met en valeur l'offre touristique rural des zones de montagne, permettant ainsi un équilibre territorial face aux zones voisines qui possèdent un potentiel économique plus fort.
<b>IIIA Franco- British Programme</b>	Welcome to the Rives-Manche countryside	This project will revitalise the rural economy by encouraging and enabling the public more easily to visit the countryside of the other side of the Channel. It will publicise local short breaks across the border and promote sustainable tourism. It will take 1300 people to the other side. It will exploit the Rives-Manche natural assets and local tourism facilities and will enhance them.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIA Franco-British Programme</b>	Cross-channel countryside access for all	This project will: 1) Enhance the profile and quality of provision of sustainable rural tourism opportunities in Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais, and increase the flow of tourists into and between these areas; 2) Improve the quality, range and dissemination of all promotional media which market trail-based walking, horse riding and cycling opportunities in Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais; 3) Employ jointly conceived strategies (focussed upon physical and landscape enhancements and information provision), to improve and increase opportunities to enjoy informal countryside recreation activities for people currently experiencing inequality in provision, particularly the disabled.
<b>IIIB Alpine Space</b>	<b>DYNALP:</b> Valorisation of natural und cultural heritage for marketing and tourism in the Alpine Space - dynamic rural alpine space <a href="http://www.dynalp.org">www.dynalp.org</a>	DYNALP serves the implementation of the Alpine Convention. App. 50 communities from the entire Alpine Space form an operational network to provide a dynamic stimulus for the rural Alpine Space. OBJECTIVES: 1. Implementation of projects for the protocols 'tourism', 'environmental protection and landscape management', 'mountain farming', 'sustainable development and regional planning'. 2. Visualising possibilities and developing positions with regards to European regional policies 3. Increasing competence for sustainable development in small municipalities and regions. MEANS: 1. Transnational exchange of experiences. 2. Linking local competence with international expertise. 3. Applying the innovative methodology 'autodidactic learning for sustainability. The pilot actions will trigger investments of a minimum of EUR 20 million. The project structure builds on an extension of the Alliance in the Alps, which so far did not have a specifically implementation-oriented character.
<b>IIIB Atlantic Area</b>	<b>RUTA DE BAHIA:</b> The Road of Bays	The project aims to maximise the value of the natural and cultural heritage of the littoral areas of eight zones of analysis of the Atlantic Area, through the creation of a network (Itineraries of the Bays). This network seeks, on the one hand, to strengthen synergies and links at the level of the management and organisation of resources between littoral and rural zones (cf. back country and urban zones). On the other hand, the network will make it possible to put into effect a common methodology for integrated management of the natural and cultural heritage by means of a series of new infrastructures.
<b>IIIB Baltic Sea Region</b>	<b>RDC:</b> Rural Development Connection <a href="http://www.interreg-rdc.com">www.interreg-rdc.com</a>	The project will: Improve the rural infrastructure, esp. cycling, hiking, riding paths, water ways and infrastructure in harbours/marinas through the implementation of planning and realisation of small scale investments; - create 200 new companies and business ideas and offer education for entrepreneurs; - establish several regional and transnational thematic networks with 300 participants; - develop 16 thematic rural tourism products (e.g. Open Village Churches in Vorpommern); - produce several activity guides and a transnational catalogue for handicapped tourism; - organise four transnational study trips to partner areas for 160 participants; - establish IT portals and create marketing and dissemination materials; - be the platform for transnational expert discussion rounds on joint strategies to safeguard a rural infrastructure that meets the requirements of the future.
<b>IIIB North Sea</b>	<b>BESST:</b> Business and Environment linked through Small-Scale Tourism <a href="http://www.besst.org">www.besst.org</a>	The project stimulates economic development of rural areas based on the environmental distinctiveness of the regions. Main method is the use of a 'virtuous spiral' concept, which uses four activity areas (new tourism offers, marketing and sales, maximising special regional qualities and linking environmental and economic activity) to promote environment based economic activity.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIC North</b>	<b>DestiLink:</b> Network on Sustainable Tourism Destination Development <a href="http://www.destilink.net">www.destilink.net</a>	DestiLink wants to increase the competitiveness of rural regions by creating a network of sustainable tourism development practitioners and researches, and thereby linking the regions with the research community. The aim is to facilitate capacity building in the regions through the exchange of experience and best practice examples. Further aims are to develop efficient destination management tools and to increase the innovation potential in the regions.
<b>IIIC North</b>	<b>KNOT:</b> Culture, Nature and Tourism network <a href="http://www.geoshare.net/knot/website/">http://www.geoshare.net/knot/website/</a>	The overall objective of KNOT is to create a lasting network of projects developing cultural and natural heritage in order to promote sustainable tourism and rural development. The partners aim to increase their competences in cultural and natural heritage management and to create joint tools for easier access to tourist information via the Internet and mobile phone.
<b>IIIC South</b>	<b>REV-ELARG:</b> Réseau Européen de Tourisme de Village <a href="http://www.euronet-village.com">www.euronet-village.com</a>	The European regions participating in this project face adverse conditions affecting rural areas located in marginal parts of Europe. Villages are places where local communities share rural life, services, frequent contacts and the feeling of belonging to the place, to their history and to their heritage. These villages should be protected by their inhabitants through the development and marketing of tourist services, as a means for fuelling and promoting the integrated and sustainable development of the rural world and its activities.

### Sub-theme local products

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIA France – Spain</b>	Centre for promoting Organic farm products	Il s'agit de: - Encourager et promouvoir la production et la consommation de produits écologiques des deux côtés de la frontière des Pyrénées, ainsi que diffuser la culture de production écologique entre les différents secteurs d'activité impliqués et les consommateurs finaux des deux régions - créer une activité économique adéquate au territoire de localisation du projet qui permette le maintien de la population dans les zones rurales - à partir de cette activité, permettre un développement soutenable à l'intérieur du territoire de localisation du projet et aide à la préservation d'un environnement susceptible d'être exploité par d'autres initiatives d'entreprises (tourisme, loisirs...) - faciliter la coopération transfrontalière entre la province espagnole de Lérida et la région française des Pyrénées Orientales.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIA</b> <b>France – Spain</b>	Cultural heritage and local development in cross-border territories	L'objectif général de ce dossier est de mettre en place une dynamique de développement local à partir de la culture et du patrimoine de deux régions historiques et géographiquement proches. Objectifs: - Impulser le développement de l'économie touristique (tourisme, artisanat, commerce, industrie agroalimentaire, etc.) grâce à la création et à l'expérimentation de nouveaux dossiers touristiques ainsi qu' à la mise en valeur des ressources culturelles des territoires - Travailler ensemble dans les territoires frontaliers, définir et implémenter des stratégies de valorisation du patrimoine culturel, profiter du savoir-faire artisanal...Voici des facteurs de développement local. Créer de nouvelles formules économiques pour dynamiser les activités liées au tourisme ( logements et restauration, commerce, artisanat, spectacles artistiques...) - Montrer et diffuser l'intérêt de ces stratégies de valorisation du territoire comme facteur de développement des zones rurales - Renforcer les échanges et relations entre les territoires pour faciliter la création de nouveaux futurs projets de coopération.
<b>IIIA</b> <b>France – Spain</b>	Promotion of local food products and related economy	Ce projet de valorisation des produits agroalimentaires concerne: - La diversification de la production (productions écologiques, nouveaux produits et transformations) - mise en réseau des producteurs (points d'exposition et points vente, guide de produits, site web, organisation d'un circuit transfrontalier) - renforcement de la place des femmes sur les exploitations, contribuant ainsi au maintien d'activités rurales Trois axes de travail: - Réalisation d'un diagnostic territorial et localisation des participants au projet (produits de qualité et égalité des chances) - projet de formation et conseil pour l'emploi – mesures spécifiques pour des femmes - commercialisation des produits agroalimentaires de qualité, et création d'un label « qualité – égalité des chances » - établissement de préconisations pour organiser la mise en réseau des producteurs.
<b>IIIA</b> <b>France – Spain</b>	<b>SYLVAPIR:</b> Common and specific actions for forest in the Pyrenees <a href="http://interreg3france-espagne.org/article.php3?id_article=125">http://interreg3france-espagne.org/article.php3?id_article=125</a>	Il s'agit d'un programme sylvicole dans les Pyrénées. Ce projet, constitué d'actions d'intérêt commun à tous les membres du GEIE et d'actions spécifiques, s'articule autour de six axes stratégiques: - La politique forestière et l'organisation de la filière - le développement économique et la promotion de la filière forêt-bois - le transfert de technologie et de savoir-faire - la formation et l'emploi - le développement rural - la protection de la forêt, la conservation et l'amélioration de la biodiversité.
<b>IIIB</b> <b>Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands</b>	<b>PERMUTAS:</b> Fomentar el desarrollo económico integrado de los municipios de Azores, Madeira y Canarias	El proyecto PERMUTAS, pretende fundamentalmente encontrar formas de valorización y comercialización de los productos agrícolas, artesanales, ganaderos y gastronómicos, contribuyendo al desarrollo económico y a la mejora de las condiciones de la calidad de vida y a la mejora de las actividades turísticas de las autarquías. La valorización tendrá que ser realizada a nivel de las estructuras de producción y de comercialización internas (desarrollo de los planes de cualificación del tejido comercial local) y externas (mecanismos de distribución de los productos insulares junto a los agentes turísticos y comerciales del continente).

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB Western Mediterranean</b>	<b>GAPMEDOCC:</b> The taste and the peasant arts in the West Mediterranean	«GAPMEDOCC» s'intéresse au tourisme rural en Méditerranée et plus particulièrement aux arts paysans. Il s'agit d'offrir des produits et des services touristiques mieux adaptés aux demandes actuelles et complémentaires de l'offre littorale classique, pour développer un réseau de pôles de reconnaissance des arts paysans et ruraux ayant le « goût » comme élément de cohérence d'un art de vivre retrouvé. Ces pôles seront caractérisés par leur bon goût en matière de restauration des paysages, de patrimoines vernaculaires, de produits sains, bruts ou transformés, issus de techniques agricoles traditionnelles, de préparations culinaires authentiques, et de références en matière de comportements, tant du point de vue de la préservation du patrimoine que de celle de modes de savoir-vivre.

### Sub-theme Landscape, the built environment and environmental protection

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB Baltic Sea Region</b>	<b>Castle Tomorrow:</b> Development of castles and manor houses of BSR as cultural heritage objects and town centers in rural areas <a href="http://www.castletomorrow.net">www.castletomorrow.net</a>	The project aims at the promotion, safeguarding, preservation and development of castles and manors as cultural heritage objects and town-centres of rural areas in the Baltic Sea Region by providing support to cultural heritage operators.
<b>IIIB Baltic Sea Region</b>	<b>BIRD:</b> Bird-rich wetlands of international importance, nature reserves and cultural landscapes as resources for sustainable developments in rural areas <a href="http://www.eurowetlands.org">www.eurowetlands.org</a>	The main focus is to increase rural development in areas with attractive bird rich wetlands, nature reserves and cultural landscapes. 35 joining partners in 6 Baltic countries have localised areas where a quality secured ecotourism has good assumptions to expand. The background for project is the decreasing possibilities to develop employment in rural areas where agriculture and forestry are in a situation of rapid technical and structural development. In such areas there is a need for complementary activities for the purpose to preserve employment, infrastructure and service. International quality ecotourism, based on rich nature and cultural values has turned out to be a good basis for rural development in other similar areas.
<b>IIIB CADSES</b>	<b>GreenKeys:</b> Urban Green as a Key for Sustainable Cities <a href="http://www.greenkeys-project.net/en/home.html">www.greenkeys-project.net/en/home.html</a>	GreenKeys focuses on the improvement of urban green spaces as a step for more sustainable cities. The three main objectives are (1) to provide incentives for structural changes in cities by offering possibilities for improvement of green spaces; (2) to develop a 'Pool of Green Strategies' (instruments, methods, concepts and good examples) based on the experiences to fulfil the demands concerning future needs and (3) using the synergies will promote the transfer of knowledge through a network by fostering the exchange of transnational experiences.



Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB CADSES</b>	<b>HERITOUR:</b> Cultural thematic route development in rural areas <a href="http://www.heritour.com">www.heritour.com</a>	The project's main objective is the protection, thematic organisation and promotion of local cultural heritage in remote/rural/mountainous/border areas in forms of regional and transnational cultural routes. This objective is intended to be reached by carrying out the following main activities: Assessment of local cultural heritage; Elaboration of feasibility studies and marketing strategies on possible transnational thematic routes and on needed investments; Architectural planning activities for investment (cultural heritage included in the thematic route where protection is needed, tourist access infrastructure); Implementation of marketing tools suggested by the transnational marketing strategy.
<b>IIIB Madeira- Azores- Canary Islands</b>	<b>MACARURAL:</b> Revalorisation of the inheritance in the rural areas of Macaronesia <a href="http://www.crokis.com/macarural">www.crokis.com/macarural</a>	The project 'The Revaluation of the Patrimony in the Rural Macaronesia' tries to use the nexus of union of the four archipelagos from Macaronesia to create homogenous directives of local development, centering the efforts in the nature conservation and the restoration of the architectonic historical patrimony, natural and cultural in order to facilitate the economic and social development of the different zones.
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>SOS II:</b> Sustainable Open Spaces II <a href="http://www.sos-project.org">www.sos-project.org</a>	The Sustainable Open Spaces II (SOS II) project intends to further develop the concept of 'open space' examined in the IIC project, to consider ways in which the importance of landscape identity can be achieved. The project acknowledges the importance of retaining the quality of historical assets and stabilising the relationship between town and country. It seeks to i) conserve and enhance the cultural and natural heritage through a range of investments; ii) develop joint promotional strategies and tools for raising awareness of landscape identities; iii) establish a knowledge exchange network; and iv) promote a partnership for long-lasting activity on open space issues.
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>SEPTENTRION:</b> From the Fortified to the Sustainable Town <a href="http://www.septentrion-ieper.be/index.html">www.septentrion-ieper.be/index.html</a>	This project draws on the historical legacy of the Low Countries to examine its transnational cultural identity across the territory located between the four major urban heartlands of north-west Europe. The five-year project seeks to make a coherent link between the architectural heritage and network of Flemish, Walloon and Dutch cities – particularly, in the guise of its fortified towns – and contemporary planning for sustainable development. Recognising that space has been 'eaten into' by expanding urban networks and sprawl, the project advocates commitment to firm action to tackle imbalances which impede upon environmental quality.
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>BOUNDLESS PARKS, NATURALLY!</b> <a href="http://www.boundlessparks.com/">www.boundlessparks.com/</a>	The project led by the Province of Gelderland involves three partner regions from Belgium, Netherlands and the UK, which have major natural sites recognised at the European level as part of the NATURA 2000 network. There are four main objectives: To give a vision for the development of recreational facilities in protected and densely populated areas; to steer recreational land use and build up knowledge in planning evaluation tools, particularly in rural areas in transition; to implement innovative marketing strategies; and to tackle the fragmentation of natural areas to create a base for future projects.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>LIFESCAPE:</b> Your Landscape <a href="http://www.lifescapeyourlandscape.org">www.lifescapeyourlandscape.org</a>	The link between cities and their immediate rural hinterlands is eroding across north-west Europe as urban centres develop closer links with the global economy. These kinds of pressures are especially great in the 'Central Zone' of north-west Europe, where the LIFESCAPE project partners are all based. The objective of LIFESCAPE is to demonstrate that there is synergy between the maintenance of landscape identity and economic development.
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>SAUL:</b> Sustainable & Accessible Urban Landscapes <a href="http://www.saulproject.net">www.saulproject.net</a>	SAUL (Sustainable and Accessible Urban Spaces) seeks to take forward a IIC project (New Methods in Socially Compatible Development of Urban Landscapes) to the development phase, to tackle the question of the role of 'socially-inclusive' spaces in metropolitan regions, as well as the themes of regional identity and learning in planning cultures and partnerships. The objective of the action project, which involves eight partners from four Member States, is to develop and test a range of practical solutions formulated through a transnational partnership to the challenges described in four key areas.
<b>IIIB South-West Europe</b>	<b>EURMET:</b> Urban Sprawl of Major Cities in South West Europe <a href="http://www.eurmet-sudoe.org">www.eurmet-sudoe.org</a> (restricted access)	The Eurmet project aims at characterising the outskirts of ten major cities located in three countries of south-west Europe: Barcelona, Madrid, Sevilla and Valencia in Spain; Bordeaux, Clermont-Ferrand, Montpellier and Toulouse in France; Lisbon and Porto in Portugal. Besides the definition of the physical limits of these cities, the project focuses on the identification of the content of their peripheral areas and the type of spatial organisation of the latter.
<b>IIIB Western Mediterranean</b>	<b>EXTRAMET:</b> The rural space in the context of the new metropolisation	L'objectif principal du projet est la coopération entre les Régions et les organismes qui sont en charge de la planification et de la programmation afin d'établir des bases communes pour l'expérimentation d'une méthodologie innovatrice orientée vers l'espace "urbain-rural" (extrametropolitain), entre les zones urbaines sujettes à la pression de la métropolisation et les zones rurales sujettes à des phénomènes d'abandon diffus.
<b>IIIB Western Mediterranean</b>	<b>Métropole Nature:</b> The natural peri-urban spaces and sustainable city <a href="http://www.metropolenature.org">www.metropolenature.org</a>	« Métropole Nature » s'intéresse aux espaces naturels péri-urbains dans un contexte de développement territorial urbain durable. Ces espaces naturels péri-urbains (ENP: Ouverts, naturels, non construits, d'intérêt environnemental ou agricole, forestiers....) sont souvent situés dans des zones qui ne sont plus ni urbaines, ni rurales, au sens traditionnel du terme. Ensemble, ils participent au fonctionnement de la « ville », et en font partie à part entière. Ils sont à la fois fragiles et menacés et leur intégration au fonctionnement urbain est souvent niée ou délaissée. Le projet « Métropole Nature » s'intéresse à ces espaces non construits dans les aires métropolitaines.
<b>IIIB Western Mediterranean</b>	<b>URBACOST:</b> Coastal Urbanisation and rural historical areas: An intervention model <a href="http://www.urbacost.org">www.urbacost.org</a>	«URBACOST» s'intéresse aux zones côtières et rurales en les plaçant dans un contexte d'urbanisation liée à leur passé historique. Le projet a pour but d'étudier et de surveiller les conditions des réalités côtières de la Méditerranée Occidentale, et propose de les intégrer en ensembles cohérents et compatibles avec une meilleure qualité de vie. Il s'agit donc d'étudier le système actuel des petites villes côtières dans lesquelles des phénomènes liés à l'urbanisation spontanée sont fréquents, et par conséquent au processus précaire d'utilisation des ressources environnementales qui se traduit par des phénomènes de congestion territoriale et de coopération insuffisante entre les agents du développement économique.

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIC West</b>	<b>CULTURED:</b> Best practice in the preservation and market-oriented valorisation of CULTural heritage as an instrUment of REgional Development <a href="http://www.culturedeu.org">www.culturedeu.org</a>	The project aims to connect planners and stakeholders in different regions to study and discuss good and bad practice in relation to built heritage. The project will specifically focus on built heritage in rural areas and the urban-rural partnership, as well as cultural heritage as an instrument of regional development.
<b>IIIC South</b>	<b>VISTORIA:</b> Paysages Historiques de l'Europe <a href="http://www.cult.gva.es/vistoria">www.cult.gva.es/vistoria</a>	Throughout history, human activity has shaped our urban, suburban and rural landscapes. The overall objective of VISTORIA is to build a permanent partnership to deal with landscape problems; to set up a theoretical procedure for evaluating landscapes based on their history; to establish a plan for tourism based on sustainable land development; to establish a communication strategy to disseminate the notions of respect and fragility in line with the principles advocated by the European Landscape Convention (ELC).

## Theme Demography

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB Atlantic Area</b>	<b>SOHO SOLO:</b> To attract in the Atlantic rural areas new actives using in their jobs information and communication technologies <a href="http://www.soho-solo.com">www.soho-solo.com</a>	This project is intended to encourage a welcome for "SOHO/SOLO" (workers who wish to change lifestyle by moving to the countryside, and who partly telecommute from home using information and communications technology) in rural parts of the Atlantic Area. The primary goals are to: ·Develop skill centres through welcoming new arrivals; ·Bring new skills to rural areas; Favour economic development and polycentrism in these areas; Reinforce the A.A.'s image as a welcoming business area.
<b>IIIB Madeira- Azores- Canary Islands</b>	<b>ROOTS:</b> Active youth in the Rural Development	This project intends to promote the socio-economical development of the rural areas from its roots, having in mind to generate dynamics associated to the youth. The project seeks development among small towns and medium cities of the macaronésica region due to the alarming number of young people who leave the interior of the regions.
<b>IIIB Northern Periphery</b>	<b>PICYBU:</b> Participation in Rural Communities by Young Broadband Users - PICYBU <a href="http://www.picybu.org">www.picybu.org</a>	Many Northern Periphery areas are characterised by high youth out-migration and often it is those that are highly educated that leave, partly due to a lack of services in rural areas, particularly e-services. The objective of the PICYBU project is to test, pilot and evaluate how different media and ICT applications, and tools can contribute to the social participation of young people in rural communities.

## Theme Governance

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB Alpine Space</b>	<b>ALPCITY:</b> Local endogenous development and urban regeneration of small alpine towns <a href="http://www.alpcity.it">www.alpcity.it</a>	AlpCity focuses on local development and urban regeneration of small alpine towns. AlpCity aims at promoting common understanding, cultural/political change, through a large transnational partnership and different groups of activities, namely: Networking and exchange to create common knowledge and strategies, collection of local best practices, innovative project-cases by single local authorities, dissemination/communication, guidelines/future scenarios.
<b>IIIB Baltic Sea Region</b>	<b>ProMidNord:</b> Sustainable Development in the Mid Nordic Region <a href="http://www.promidnord.net">www.promidnord.net</a>	The eight County Councils from Norway, Sweden and Finland covering the Mid Nordic Region (MNR)-are facing great challenges such as an ongoing decrease of the population and a tendency towards centralisation of the whole society. The five areas of cooperation: 1) Strengthening the MNR as a macroregion and introducing joint Spatial Development as a method; 2) Environment and eco-competitiveness; 3) Sustainable Energy Development; 4) Youth, Regional Development and Democracy; 5) Culture and cultural heritage as a means for sustainable development.
<b>IIIB CADSES</b>	<b>COHESION:</b> Integrated Concepts Enhancing Cohesion of European Space <a href="http://www.asista.cz/eng/cohesion.htm">www.asista.cz/eng/cohesion.htm</a>	European rural areas are confronted with serious problems, with which they have to cope in order to survive. The globalisation of the economy and the new CAP lead to a shrinking of the competitiveness of European agricultural areas. Structural measures with a territorial approach have to compensate the difficulties emerging from the new situation. In this changing environment local competitiveness becomes a key issue. A sector or a specific product, significant for a particular area's identity, may become, in this context, poles of growth for the entire area ensuring its further survival.
<b>IIIB North Sea</b>	<b>Town-Net</b> <a href="http://www.town-net.nl">www.town-net.nl</a>	The project aims to strengthen town networks by developing their internal cooperation and complementarity. The themes the project covers include (public) transport, with activities such as the development of inter-modal connections, and spatial quality with activities e.g. concerning the strengthening of urban-rural links and green-blue belts.
<b>IIIB North Sea</b>	<b>NS RURAL:</b> North Sea Rural Development Project <a href="http://www.northsearural.org">www.northsearural.org</a>	The focus of the project is on stimulating positive development of rural areas. In order to achieve this, three themes are identified, which development or deterioration are mutually interconnected and have a major influence on the out migration trends in the area. These are: Social/health services, transport services, and economic development.
<b>IIIB North Sea</b>	<b>URBAL</b> <a href="http://www.urbaldevelopment.com">www.urbaldevelopment.com</a>	URBAL aims to improve the management of and interrelation between urban-rural spaces to reduce territorial imbalances. On the one hand the project see to improve the understanding of, and raising awareness among local decision-makers on how to, manage urban space. On the other hand will the project look into the spatial implications of sectoral policies?

Programme	Title	Summary
<b>IIIB North West Europe</b>	<b>SPAN:</b> Strategic Planning Action Network for Local Development <a href="http://www.span-eu.org">www.span-eu.org</a>	Building on the guiding principles of polycentricity and urban-rural partnership laid down by the ESDP, this project will look at new ways of stimulating indigenous development and balanced growth. Within each of the partner regions, two territories representing a range of urban-rural mixes will serve as laboratories to explore new ways of extending community participation in planning processes, test more effective models of multi-level governance and develop new approaches to partnership building.
<b>IIIC North</b>	<b>ALICERA:</b> Action Learning for Identity and Competence in European Rural Areas <a href="http://www.alicera.org">www.alicera.org</a>	The motivation behind the ALICERA project is the realisation that currently used instruments for regional development are not sufficiently appropriate to mobilise specific endogenous potentials of rural regions. In order to promote the development of human resources in rural areas, the new and innovative strategy of 'Rural Action Learning' (RAL) is applied in the ALICERA project. RAL is an education instrument designed to strengthen both the regional identity and action competence of the people in rural areas.
<b>IIIC West</b>	<b>FARLAND:</b> Future Approaches to Land Development <a href="http://www.farland-project.org">www.farland-project.org</a>	FARLAND aims to encourage a more innovative approach to land development. By anticipating the current and future needs of local and regional authorities, FARLAND wants to place at their disposal an approach that allows them to achieve multiple objectives when tackling issues of land development in agricultural areas, environmentally-sensitive zones and metropolitan landscapes: Integrated Land Development.
<b>IIIC East</b>	<b>ICNW:</b> International Communal Network <a href="http://www.icnw.org">www.icnw.org</a>	The overall objective of the operation is to improve the effectiveness of policies and instruments for local and regional development and cohesion in rural areas through the exchange of information and experience. The operation wants to support rural municipalities in developing local strategies and land use planning and embedding these into planning concepts beyond the local dimension.
<b>IIIC North</b>	<b>R.E.N.E.:</b> Rural Extension Network Europe <a href="http://www.rene-net.org">www.rene-net.org</a>	The overall objective of R.E.N.E. is to strengthen the competitiveness of rural areas through the provision of a platform for exchanging information, experience and know-how on rural problems and solutions to these problems. The network aims to improve the synergy of rural area policies and funding programmes (in many cases these political instruments are not adequately coordinated) and strengthen the know-how of rural extension institutions responsible for these policies and programmes.
<b>IIIC East</b>	<b>RISE:</b> Regional Identity and culture, Strengths development & Environment action <a href="http://www.interreg-rise.de">www.interreg-rise.de</a>	RISE focuses on the development of 'urbanised' rural spaces. The operation aims at exchanging information and experience and implementing specific regional development actions in densely populated rural spaces. Specific emphasis is placed on innovative measures based on regional identity and culture, economic development and environmental action.





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