



## ESPON Seminar

Workshop B – Southern Europe: economic growth factors  
and tools in support of regional policies



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First Opening Statement:  
Carmela Cotrone, Campania (IT)

- Referred to Mediterranean convergence regions
- Related the discussion to EU cohesion policy
- Stressed the significance of large disparities between northern and southern Mediterranean coasts
- Stressed the need to overcome bureaucratic restrictions to investment, simplify procedures, link public funds and private investment
- Most importantly, there is a need to develop cooperation between the Mediterranean's north and south coasts
- Suggested linking north and south regions through "process innovation" to create a new tool analogous to pre-accession funds for Eastern Europe to benefit all

Second Opening Statement:  
Maria Herrero, Barcelona (ES)

- Referred to Mediterranean phasing-in regions
- Provided an overview of the Barcelona metropolitan region and its economy
- Identified the local scale as a sphere in which to design and apply economic development policies
- Observed that existing policies, based on the ESDP, need to be adjusted to confront the economic crisis
- Mentioned several emergency measures taken in the face of the crisis, with emphasis on construction and tourism

First Discussant:

## Victoria Primhak, University of Naples

- Listed indicative common risk elements, including peripherality, external borders, digital divide, insufficient service provision, vulnerable social groups etc.
- Described the impact of the crisis on convergence regions touching employment, less investment, more illegal migration, reduced potential of policies
- Enumerated the challenges for southern convergence regions (e.g. balanced response to social needs)
- Suggested a number of opportunities:
  - Introduce structural reforms
  - Provide support measures for SMEs
  - Strategic repositioning of SMESTOs
  - Potential increased competitiveness of tourism
  - Impact of investment in eco-innovation etc.

Second Discussant:

## Roberto Camagni, Milan Polytechnic

- Took a more top down approach, linking discussion with the morning session speeches
- Although less harshly hit, weaker regions will probably recover at a slower pace, expending twice the effort
- Keynesian local multiplier will not work in the long run
- Suggested shifting to “smart policies” to avoid re-launching the competitiveness/ convergence dichotomy
- Mentioned economic efficiency and social equity as goals of cohesion policy in which to invest
- Stressed that the goal of territorial cohesion is to make best use of resources and strengthen local/ regional identity as an asset for future development
- A bigger effort should be devoted to the analysis of territorial capital

## Group Discussion Main Conclusions

- Innovation in indigenous industries; tourism a key sector
- Improvement of public services and infrastructure
- Do not repeat the mistakes of the past!
- Push Keynesian demand policies towards long term supply goals with local/ global impact
- Renewable energy, biotechnology, sustainable mobility
- Integrate regional/ national policies and EU cohesion policy, speed up procedures and combat unemployment
- Good and efficient planning is needed!
- Supporting regions according to their specificities
- Avoid dualism and two-speed territories
- Valorisation of the region's specificity as link between Europe and Africa, avoid threads and use opportunities
- Think not just of growth, but of appropriate and balanced development in economy, society and the environment