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# **BEYOND 2020: MOVING FROM OBJECTIVES TO GOVERNANCE TO MASTER EVER MORE PRESSING CHALLENGES**

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## **Abstract**

The adoption of the Territorial Agenda 2030, some 20 years after the adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) (European Commission, 1999) presents an opportunity to both look back on what has been achieved and envisage developments for the next 20 years. This paper starts with some personal reflections on the aspirations put forward in the ESDP and some key achievements. The main part of the paper then concentrates on what might be done differently over the next 20 years. It is argued that because the world has changed substantially since 1999 it is time to breathe new life into the original objectives of the ESDP and support them with clear governance and implementation tools. Furthermore, the geographical coverage ought to be extended to cover the Western Balkans. The final section offers an outlook on what we might want to see when looking back again 20 years from now.

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## 1. The Aspirations of 1999

In 1999 the European Spatial Development Perspective was published following years of intergovernmental cooperation which began during the French Presidency of the European Council in 1989 (Williams, 1996; Faludi and Waterhout, 2002). The ESDP was a rather unique document, “one of a kind” and as such questions can be raised about its nature and aspirations. While Rusca (1998, p.37) perceives it as both a ‘strange animal’ and a ‘Bible’ and ‘user guide’, Faludi describes it as ‘the mother of all documents... albeit ‘no masterplan’ (Faludi, 2010a, p.106) and a document whose significance was difficult to predict (Faludi and Waterhout, 2002). Williams (1998, p.61) even described the ESDP as ‘the end of the beginning’.

Are we any wiser today, 20 years after the final adoption of the ESDP? While the process which led to the ESDP set out to develop a vision for European space, it resulted in a document which in the view of many elevated spatial planning to a European level and introduced policy aims such as polycentric development and a new urban-rural partnership. In total the ESDP document introduced no less than 60 policy options – most of which are so timeless that they are still valid 20 years later. The underlying aim of the ESDP, to push the EU towards a more balanced and sustainable development of its territory, is still valid today, not least given the territorial impacts of COVID-19.

As will be discussed later, it seems that the achievement of this aim is becoming ever more distant and one may even ask what the ESDP actually achieved given the increasing levels of spatial fragmentation in Europe (Böhme et al., 2019). I would argue that the ESDP has achieved a lot, although it is difficult to provide a counterfactual analysis of what might have happened if there had been no ESDP. Nonetheless, below I shall outline some of what I consider important achievements of the ESDP.

At the European level, transnational cooperation programmes (Interreg) emerged and started to flourish in the wake of the ESDP. Most prominently, the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON) was set up as a programme providing Europe-wide comparable territorial evidence for policy processes. It also created a ‘spatial planning’ community stretching across more than 32 countries and helped bridge the gaps between scientific research and policy-making communities (Böhme, 2016; Böhme and Schön, 2006). Initiated by the ESDP, and finally pushed forward by ESPON, territorial impact assessments (TIA) of European policies have developed from an obscure idea into an accepted practice (Böhme and Eser, 2008; Medeiros, 2014; Essig and Kaucic, 2017). More importantly, without the ESDP, territorial cohesion would not have made it into the European Treaty of Lisbon as a declared objective of European policies together with social and economic cohesion (see e.g. Schön, 2005, 2009; Faludi, 2007; Waterhout, 2007; Böhme and Eser, 2011; Bradley and Zaucha, 2017).

At national level, the ESDP had a variable influence on planning practices from local to national levels. Spatial planners and spatial planning documents especially started to stretch beyond their administrative borders and place their territories in a wider spatial context. Moreover, the changing understanding of planning, and the topics addressed in spatial planning, were in part influenced by the ESDP. In some areas one may even talk about ‘discursive integration’ (Böhme, 2006). There are a wide range of studies and articles which consider how the ESDP influenced planning practices in EU Member States and even beyond (see e.g. Böhme, 2002; Zetter, 2002; Buunk, 2003; Rivolin, 2003; Shaw and Sykes, 2003; Waterhout et al., 2009; Stead and Nadin, 2011; ESPON, 2018). The ESDP also changed the day-to-day tasks and career paths of spatial planners in Europe. The Europeanisation of planning work and CVs now reaches from university education to planning cooperation across national borders and participation in international spatial planning communities (Williams, 1996; Rusca, 1998; Böhme, 2002; Faludi, 2010a) defining more distinctly European biographies (Faludi, 2010a).

Despite all this, there remains an air of doubt around the actual meaning and achievements of the ESDP. Summing up spatial development perspectives for Europe between 1972 and 1997, Kunzmann (1998) asked whether the ESDP was perhaps naïve and ‘much ado about nothing’. Similarly, in an earlier publication working on the same lines, Zillmer and Böhme pondered whether European planning really only existed somewhere between European fruit baskets (i.e. with ‘blue bananas’ and ‘bunches of grapes’) and ‘paper tigers’ (Böhme and Zillmer, 2010). This observation being based on the insight that, aside from many fine words, it seems there

is little political appetite to give impetus to European spatial planning or territorial cohesion. On the contrary, it all remains rather voluntary and intangible with a lot of small-scale examples of practice, but hardly any claim to actually be achieving a more balanced development of the European territory (Böhme, Holstein, et al., 2015; European Commission, 2015b). Is it all too much of a 'brainy' exercise which does not engage people? And as it ostensibly promotes 'ordering the territory of the EU according to a set of spatial imaginations or visions' (Jensen and Richardson, 2004, p.3), is it still searching for answers to the questions raised by Jørgensen (1998) – 'What has love got to do with it?', or by Jancic (2005) 'Why so shy?'

## 2. Considerations for 2020-2039

Since the ESDP, intergovernmental cooperation in the field of spatial planning has continued, and a revised Territorial Agenda 2030 was adopted in December 2020 during the German EU Presidency. So, what are the key considerations to keep in mind for the next 20 years up to 2039?

The starting point for the debate on a Territorial Agenda 2030 is the current Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020, agreed by the ministers responsible for the Spatial Planning and Territorial Development in 2011 (MSPTD, 2011). This updated and reviewed the first Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2007 (MUDTCEU, 2007), which was itself based on the ESDP.

The current Territorial Agenda 2020 provides strategic policy orientations for territorial development and underlines the territorial dimension of the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth – the successor of the Lisbon Strategy adopted by the European Council in 2010 (European Commission, 2010). The Territorial Agenda 2020 identified six priorities for future territorial development in the EU:

- Promoting polycentric and balanced territorial development.
- Encouraging integrated development in cities, rural and specific regions.
- Territorial integration in cross-border and transnational functional regions.
- Ensuring global competitiveness of the regions based on strong local economies.
- Improving territorial connectivity for individuals, communities and enterprises.
- Managing and connecting ecological, landscape and cultural values of regions.

Being essentially an intergovernmental policy, member states and EU institutions have a shared responsibility for implementing the Territorial Agenda. Its complexity, abstract character and the lack of implementation mechanisms increases the weakness of the Territorial Agenda and undermines its strategic value (Böhme, Holstein, et al., 2015). This is closely related to the fact that cooperation on territorial matters takes place mainly in the intergovernmental realm, and this is not always the most straightforward vehicle for implementation. It largely depends on available resources and the priorities of member states, which often diverge (*ibid.*). The reality is that the relevance of the Territorial Agenda in public policy decision making is gradually decreasing (Medeiros, 2016).

This raises the question of what ought to be different in the revised Territorial Agenda that was tabled in late 2020? Are the objectives and topics addressed still attracting political interest? Is the approach on how to address the objectives and topics clear? Has an approach to governing and implementing the Agenda been decided?

### 2.1. Reviving and Updating Territorial Cohesion Objectives

The objectives and topics addressed in the ESDP and the successive Territorial Agendas are still relevant and possibly even more so than they were 20 years ago. The original thinking was very much based on a social planning understanding, and placed emphasis on balanced development, cohesion and some degree of spatial equality. While general European policy discourse – as expressed in the Europe 2020 Strategy (European Commission, 2010), for example – has shifted away from cohesion and towards supporting growth poles and hoping for spill-over effects to the rest of the territory, the Territorial Agendas have remained committed to balanced development and territorial cohesion.

The world has changed substantially since the adoption of the ESDP and even the most recent Territorial Agenda (2011). The financial crisis of the late 2000s, COVID-19, migration, climate change, and digitalisation have all shaped our world (and the policy environment) rapidly. These changes have contributed to increased societal and territorial fragmentation (ESPON, 2019b), something that can be seen in emerging notions such as ‘places left behind’ (Rodríguez-Pose, 2018), ‘places of discontent’ (Dijkstra et al., 2018), or a ‘diverse European geography of territorial futures’ (Böhme et al., 2019). The emerging discourse about ‘places left behind’ in particular suggests that we have reached a point where ideas supporting balanced development and cohesion need to come back to the forefront of policy to ensure we are not putting the achievements of European integration at risk. The return of territorial cohesion objectives will undoubtedly shape the future well-being of people living in Europe, and its economic, social and territorial cohesion. In other words, the overall objectives and ideas of the ESDP and Territorial Agendas seem set to become even more relevant in the years to come, as current development trends, such as in the fields of pandemic-responses, technology, economy, demography and climate, risk increasing spatial disparities even further. In fact, these trends make an even stronger case for re-emphasising the objectives articulated in the previous Territorial Agenda documents.

In terms of territorial focus, importance has shifted increasingly towards functional areas (ESPON, 2017), soft spaces, fuzzy boundaries (Faludi, 2010b; Haughton et al., 2010; Allmendinger et al., 2014), and post-territorial approaches to planning (Faludi, 2018). All this requires a new take on understanding and approaching a revived objective of territorial cohesion and balanced development. The Territorial Agenda 2030 makes a step in that direction.<sup>1</sup> Its strapline – ‘a future for all places’ –recognises the need to address the growing inequalities between places and people as well as unsustainable development which has reached a critical level in Europe. In that sense it approaches territorial cohesion in a more contemporary manner and defines two overarching objectives, a Just Europe and a Green Europe. These are further broken down into six priorities Table 1 / Figure 1:

Table 1: Objectives and Priorities of the Territorial Agenda 2030

- A Just Europe that offers future perspectives for all places and people
  - Balanced Europe: Better balanced territorial development utilising Europe’s diversity
  - Functional Regions: Convergent local and regional development, less inequality between places
  - Integration Beyond Borders: Easier living and working across national borders
- A Green Europe that protects our common livelihoods and shapes societal transition
  - Healthy Environment: Better ecological livelihoods and climate-neutral and resilient towns, cities and regions
  - Circular Economy: Strong and sustainable local economies in a globalised world
  - Sustainable Connections: Sustainable digital and physical connectivity of places

## Objectives and Priorities

A future for all places



Figure 1 - Objectives and Priorities of the Territorial Agenda 2030  
Source: www.territorialagenda.eu

1 See www.territorialagenda.eu.

## 2.2. Equipping Territorial Cohesion Objectives with Strong Governance Approaches

The approach to addressing objectives and topics outlined in the ESDP and Territorial Agendas is in need of reconsideration. Addressing the objectives is not an easy task, and requires many different players to come together. This has been the weak point of the process since the very beginning. While the spatial planning community highlighted the relevant issues, it failed to mobilise sufficient action to generate change. Therefore, ESPON (2019b) argues that the next Territorial Agenda could benefit from fresh wording. More broadly, the most important innovation would be to turn away from a single Agenda document and towards an understanding in which the Territorial Agenda is seen as a long-term policy process in the form of a framework for action. In short, this framework should have two pillars or pathways, one focusing on bottom-up territorial visions and one on cooperation between places, sectors and societal groups.

### 2.2.1. A New Need for Territorial Visions

No one actor can address the challenges ahead or realise bottom-up visions single-handedly. Europe needs stronger cooperation between places, sector policies, and societal groups across geographical levels. This requires high quality governance and the capacity of many players to engage in visioning and cooperation efforts. To achieve this, many players and places might need capacity-building and empowerment (Rodríguez-Pose, 2020).

Territorial visions were particularly in vogue around 20 years ago. A good example would be the work carried out by VASAB – Visions and Strategies around the Baltic Sea (VASAB secretariat, 1994). Tatzberger (2006) discussed the essential role of ‘vision’ in European spatial development. Since then, the appetite for spatial visions and, in particular, spatial visions which transcend larger areas and national borders has declined. Recently there have not been so many prominent examples of these, with initiatives such as the common future vision for the German-Polish Interaction Area, developed by the Spatial Development Committee of the German-Polish Governmental Commission for Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation (2016), or the cross-border spatial vision for Greater-Luxembourg, currently under preparation, being notable exceptions. The absence of a shared vision for the European territory of tomorrow is increasingly becoming an issue. It implies an absence of a common ground on which to bring together various sector policies, as well as a lack of guidance which can enable local and regional development to be placed in a larger context (Böhme and Tøptsidou, 2017; Mehlbye et al., 2019).

Besides a top-down Europe-wide vision, there is also a need for diverse and multifaceted bottom-up visions for functional areas in Europe. These can be smaller functional rural areas, functional regions, functional urban areas, cross-border functional areas, or transnational or macro-regional functional areas. Depending on the function addressed, the area may be rather diverse. To bring Europe closer to the citizens and ensure that all places and parts of society are included, Europe needs diverse and multifaceted bottom-up visions for its places and functional regions. These need to be realistic, place-based and include links to a wider European perspective. The visions may be multifaceted and even diverge from mainstream policy ideas about growth and innovation (Martin et al., 2018; Mehlbye et al., 2019). Faludi, in his latest book (Faludi, 2018), argued that moving towards a post-territorial Europe means that each functional area needs to actively manage its links with other functional areas in Europe. For this it will need a clear vision about its own future in relation to other places.

Sadly, the Territorial Agenda 2030 does not offer a strong spatial vision for Europe. Rather, the vision is implicitly provided in the aims ‘a Europe which holds positive future perspectives for all people’, and the idea of a just and green Europe. This might, however, provide a framework and some stimulus for further debate on how such a Europe might look. In a perfect world, this debate would be part of the dialogue and conference on the future of Europe launched by the European Commission in 2020. More realistically, though, this debate might be taken forward by planners at various levels scales and by academics researching and debating different facets of how this implicit vision might be more concretely manifested.

### 2.2.2. A New Need for Cooperation

In an increasingly complex world, where growing interdependencies imply that decisions taken in one place affect the development outlook of other places and vice versa, there are not many things left that can be addressed single-handedly. For many years, the focus on multilevel governance and territorial governance (Bache and Flinders, 2004; Böhme, Zillmer, et al., 2015; European Commission, 2015a; Alcantara et al., 2016) has illustrated that spatial planning and territorial development are tasks that require the cooperation of many scales and actors. The need to develop more approaches to cooperation is once again being emphasised, as the simple reality is that resolving future development challenges requires cooperation (ESPON, 2017, 2019a; Mehlbye and Böhme, 2017).

The new calls for cooperation go substantially beyond the idea of cooperation as reflected in European spatial planning over the past decades. Often cooperation is focused on European Territorial Cooperation programmes, widely known as Interreg, which have become the *de facto* EU approach to supporting territorial cooperation. It can even be argued that they have become a rather isolated (sector) policy. It relies on a committed, yet small, professional community that is rather dispersed and disconnected in how it champions a stronger drive for cooperation beyond Interreg. This rather limited presence and profile has perpetuated the tension between 'place-blind' and 'place-based' policies (Barca et al., 2012), making it hard to consider the impacts different policies might be producing in relation to further social and economic fragmentation. Consequently, one can state that the territorial dimension in EU policies has been increasingly overlooked and the role cooperation could play in addressing different challenges has been undervalued.

Another important point stresses cooperation as a bottom-up approach to policy making in functional areas. This approach is gaining momentum in local, regional and national policy making, not least because it offers a response to the current 'distance' between citizens and policy making. Cooperation actions can also be channelled and tailored across different places and levels, responding to the need to address functional rather than administrative areas.

Cooperation in Europe should be strategically positioned as a key enabler to respond to challenges and address opportunities, various interdependencies and mismatches of territorial functionalities. ESPON (2019b) stresses that this approach to cooperation is not limited to European Territorial Cooperation programmes but takes a much broader approach:

- **Cooperation between places (addressing flows):** Cooperation between different places or territorial entities can help to address interdependencies between territories. This is directly linked to addressing flows between places – including both the 'flow of spaces' and the 'space of flows' (Blatter, 2004) – and understanding places not as separate islands but as webs or networks with considerable flows. Developments in one place depend on the flows between it and other places and thus on the development in other places. Innovative cooperation forms can reduce the mismatch between the geography of decision making and the geography of the phenomenon addressed. By better addressing challenges at local and regional level, it can also help in tackling territorial fragmentation. Cooperation is relevant at any geographical level – between and within places, municipalities, regions, countries, and diverse kinds of functional areas.
- **Cooperation between policy sectors:** Cooperation is not limited to territorial entities. Players from different policy sectors cooperating and adopting a more integrated perspective can help in addressing interdependencies, fragmentation and mismatches in functionalities. Improving sector coordination and overcoming the silo structures of policy making – such as in public administration and business organisations – might facilitate the development of more powerful, integrated policy responses to key challenges. This type of cooperation may take the form of impact assessments which illustrate mutual interlinkages and comment on the impact of other sector policies.
- **Cooperation between societal groups:** Cooperation between different groups to overcome social fragmentation (which can be observed across groups with different income levels, social status, mobility options, cultural characteristics or religious backgrounds), could provide new directions for supporting European integration. Indeed, to a large degree the challenge of social fragmentation caused by increasing regional disparities and (real and perceived) inequalities, can be seen as spatial expressions of an increasingly fragmented economy and society in Europe. Cooperation in this area may involve any societal group, and can support citizens in interacting with people outside their usual communities and peer groups.

In principle, these three types of cooperation have been emphasised in the context of multilevel governance for some decades already (Bache and Flinders, 2004; ESPON, 2014; European Commission, 2015a). They are closely related to the aspiration to reduce disparities in the quality of government and institutional capacities across European institutions. Good government is both an objective of, and a precondition for, successful cooperation.

The Territorial Agenda 2030 places more emphasis on implementation compared to its predecessors. It underlines the need for cooperation between a wide range of players to achieve its aim. It also emphasises the need to strengthen: multi-level governance; place-based approaches; coordinated sector policy territorial impacts and coherence; cooperation between territories; territorial cohesion at European level; territorial cohesion at cross-border, transnational, inter- and intraregional levels; and, Member State and neighbouring country contributions to territorial cohesion.

The Territorial Agenda 2030 calls upon a range of different players and asks them explicitly to contribute within their regular mandates to achieving the priorities it sets out. As an intergovernmental document, it has neither legal nor financial means to facilitate its implementation. It relies on persuasive powers and the support and good will of interested players. To underline their willingness to put the Territorial Agenda into practice, a number of national and regional players across Europe have come together and developed six pilot, or showcase, actions which they will implement in the course of 2021 and 2022.<sup>2</sup> The hope is that this will inspire others and thus trigger multiple actions putting the Territorial Agenda into practice.

### **2.2.3. A New Need to Look Beyond EU Boundaries and Include the Western Balkans**

The geographical coverage of the Territorial Agenda 2030 is also an issue. In 1999, there was a need to reflect the planned 2004 enlargement in the ESDP (Finka, 2001). After some discussion, the ESDP, addressing mainly the then 15 EU member states, was enriched by a special chapter on accession countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

In the same way, the Territorial Agenda also ought to look beyond the current set of member states, as territorial developments in the EU influence developments outside the EU and vice versa. Particular attention should be given to the Western Balkans (Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo) to support their further European integration and ambitions to improve territorial governance in these countries.

Many of the challenges outlined and addressed by the Territorial Agenda are also valid in the Western Balkans, albeit often in more fundamental terms. In particular, the governance dimension of spatial planning is a key concern for the Western Balkans, where there is a need to empower civil society players at local and regional levels to enhance public policy making. In light of the prospect of future European integration, issues such as the rule of law, weak and uncompetitive economies, bilateral disputes, and challenges related to territorial governance need to be addressed at this crucial stage in their development (Berisha et al., 2018; Cotella, 2018; Western Balkan Network on Territorial Governance, 2018).

Supporting cooperation between places, policy sectors and societal groups (as well as bottom-up territorial visions) can prove a useful approach in strengthening territorial governance and European integration efforts in the Western Balkans. Including the Western Balkans in the Territorial Agenda would thus not only fill an awkward 'white spot' on the European map and acknowledge the development interdependencies between places in the EU and the Western Balkans, it would also support bottom-up integration processes.

The Territorial Agenda 2030 does not explicitly address the Western Balkans. However, it encourages everyone involved in spatial planning and territorial development policies at all administrative and governance levels in the EU and neighbouring countries to take note of the Territorial Agenda and to put it into practice. This is not an exclusively EU-centric agenda but is open to the inclusion of other interested countries.

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2 For more information on the pilot actions see <https://territorialagenda.eu/actions.html>

### 3. Outlook post 2039

This special issue looks back at 20 years of the ESDP. Many of the objectives formulated more than 20 years ago are still valid, and the challenges identified appear to be even more pressing today than then. Therefore, it is time to gear up to meet these. To do so, a focus on governance and implementation mechanisms seems most pressing. As a thought experiment, assume that it is possible to update the Territorial Agenda and equip it with a successful governance process. What could Europe look like 20 years from now, when the ESDP would turn 40? Would it have:

- Overcome Europe's territorial and societal fragmentation by embracing Europe's diversity, fostering a multitude of options for places to develop depending on their inherent potential and their ideas for a desirable future?
- Delivered territorial cohesion through 'intangibles' rather than focusing on tangible results in terms of infrastructure investments, or innovation and growth initiatives?
- Fostered high quality governments and governance processes at all geographical levels which engage with flexible governance solutions and multi-level territorial governance at the level of functional areas?
- Endowed local players with the capacity and empowerment to engage in flexible governance processes, embedding policies in larger geographical contexts?

With such themes in mind, and looking both backwards and forwards, the article closes with invited comments from three 'Territorial Thinkers'<sup>3</sup> who were involved in the development of the ESDP and are still active in giving a voice to territorial concerns in European policy making:

**Peter Mehlbye:** "An envisaged revival of current territorial cohesion objectives and the territorial priorities of the TA should, on the one hand, include changes and updates responding to the new territorial challenges and (more global) realities. On the other hand, it is crucial that the territorial cohesion objectives and Territorial Agenda 2030's strategic orientation is appealing and understandable for policy makers at different levels and in different places. Furthermore, a third priority should be considered in the Territorial Agenda 2030 process – namely updating the overall strategic orientations for the development of the European territory and explaining in greater detail what they could imply for different types of territories, regions and cities, and making use of the latest ESPON findings. This would support consistency, and benefit the bottom-up visions and their implementation through improved governance structures. Without some (soft) European level strategic guidance, the risk is a dispersed implementation that afterwards might not be considered in line with the territorial priorities set out in a Territorial Agenda 2030. Finally, solid communication and a dialogue about the long-term aspirations for the European territory as such would improve the uptake and use by places, sectors and societal groups, and thereby stimulate the chances for success of a Territorial Agenda 2030".

**Karl Peter Schön:** "Growing inequalities and social fragmentation are – besides climate change – in my view the most challenging factors in European development these days. Fragmentation is the main source of discontent and disintegration and is a danger not just for established parties, which are losing voters' support, but potentially even for democracy and cohesion in Europe. Already 20 years ago, the ESDP was triggered by the challenges caused by growing disparities in Europe, and promoted a more balanced and polycentric development in Europe, to be implemented through an integrative European territorial policy. These activities eventually led to a new aim in the Lisbon EU Treaty of 2009: Territorial Cohesion. However, until now, neither the Commission nor the member states made full use of this shared competence. It is necessary to further develop the joint implementation of territorial cohesion by both Commission and member states (and their regions and cities) including broad public discourses and multi-level visions and strategies for more territorial cohesion and less inequality and social fragmentation in Europe. The ESDP of 1999 was the first European territorial document which was later complemented by the Territorial Agendas of 2007 and 2011, the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities (2007) and more recently the Urban Agenda for the EU (2016) and the New Urban Agenda of the United Nations (2016). All of them have a focus on territories, smaller and larger, urban and non-urban, and on space and the built environment. It is time now that these diverse or different agenda processes grow together".

3 See [www.territorialthinkers.eu](http://www.territorialthinkers.eu)

**Derek Martin:** “The free-thinking and enthusiasm of the Europe of the 1990s that led to the ESDP is no more. Europe has entered a new phase of self-reflection in which a number of quite fundamental dilemmas will have to be faced and answered, especially regarding the division of competences between the European institutions and the member states. ‘Territory’ is at the heart of many of those dilemmas. The territorial continuum of the Single Market clashes with the territorial fragmentation of a return to more national political control. The member states will have to decide: territorial cooperation or territorial competition. If they decide the first, indispensable if sustainable economic growth is to be maintained, then some sort of indicative European Territorial Reference Framework will be necessary. This will not be a revised ESDP but a totally new document, a forward-looking and strategic overview of territorial interdependencies. For times have indeed changed.”

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