

ECTP NTCCP Cyprus

To: ECTP-CEU

From: Jan Vogelij

Re: NTCCP meeting

The NTCCP (Network of Territorial Cohesion Contact Points) met during Cypriot EU Presidency in Nicosia on 3 september 2012.

1. General:

The NTCCP is the EU working group on matters regarding European policy for spatial development, which prepares the meetings of the DGs and the Ministers responsible for spatial development of the EU countries

The group consists of a representative of the relevant member state Ministries and of the European Commission DG Regio, European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, Espon, CEMR and the ECTP-CEU as representation of the planning profession.

The working group prepares EU policies for implementing the Territorial Agenda of the EU, aiming at enhanced Territorial Cohesion.

2. Policy coordination

With regard to EU Cohesion policy programming it is stressed that more efforts should be undertaken to ensure that territorial cohesion and the territorial dimension is appropriately reflected in all steps of the future EU Cohesion Policy and its programming.

The Commission (DG Regio) will systematically screen all policies on opportunities to include the territorial dimension and to link territorial cohesion with sector policies.

3. TIA

Territorial Impact Assessment (TIA) is also a tool supportive for mainstreaming territorial cohesion. The Commission will come this year with ideas about applying TIA, which are partly based on ESPON achievements.

The ongoing preparation of a handbook on Territorial Impact Assessment by the UK and The Netherlands will be reconsidered on its added value because new information became available in ESPON and other studies. (see also ECTP-CEU written reaction on request, submitted after the meeting)

4. Communication

The lack of awareness, also among professionals, about the Territorial Agenda creates problems in implementing this policy.

On the issue of communicating the Territorial Agenda 2020, the discussion was about preparing an annual event, brochures and flyers. Also the Open Days of the Commission will be used to better communicate this policy, which is essential for the future (position of) the planning profession.

5. White Paper

The idea to prepare a white paper on Territorial Cohesion was not supported. It might be enticing to do so, but the formal way will not really be effective according to most members of the working group. (see also the ECTP-CEU written reaction submitted on request after the meeting)

6. Future of ESPON

The discussion about the future of ESPON, which includes a different relation to the Member States and the Commission by forming an EGCT, did not make much progress during the summer period.

Continuation of ESPON is assured for next programming period, but the organisational structure is still not decided.

The planners interest: to simplify procedures of contracting and of controlling and accounting is taken well on board.

7. Place-based approach and endogenous growth.

This issue, which is in the heart of the integrative approach of the spatial planning profession, is generally understood as the way forward, much needed in this period of economic stand-still.

So the concept of place-based approaches will be pursued and elaborated.

Poland prepares an inventory on the application of place-based approaches within the Member States, and (of course) went into discussions on definitions.

A Cypriot case study was presented in which “structured democratic dialogue” resulted in consensus among 150 individuals on a future development vision for a wine village near Limassol. Optimal use of territorial potentials, in terms of physical assets as well as knowledge and capabilities of the people is essential for endogenous development.

Extra attention is required for peripheral territories.

An Austrian study showed that the general idea among politicians that easy accessibility of a territory is the precondition for economic development, was not supported. (Tranquility in isolation is also a spatial quality). This knowledge supports the spatial planning and territorial cohesion objective of enhancing spatial diversity.

JCV

Soest NL

10/09/2012