

Spatial North

Spatial Planning in Northern Peripheral Regions

Spatial planning and development have been developed as a method in the EU over a long period, and have resulted in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP). However, the specific conditions in the NPP area make it important to develop methods for spatial planning and development that are adapted for the region. In order to achieve this, exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of spatial planning and development are required. The region also needs to analyse the ESDP both from a methodological point of view and for its analysis and proposals. To ensure a more attractive society in the Northern Periphery, it is vital that the very diverse policies and strategies, addressing different themes at different scales, and concerning all elements of the social economy (e.g., natural resources, forestry, tourism, energy, services sectors) have a clearer focus to provide a framework for strategic and sustainable development. The primary aim of the project is to develop a 'toolbox' or set of good practices for integrated and participatory spatial planning and development; applicable to the partner regions and all other regions of the Northern Periphery Programme Area, as well as to other parts of Europe.

Objectives

- Development of better methods for Spatial Planning and Development at local and regional levels in the Northern Periphery Area.
- Collaboration between partner regions to develop best practice and exchange of experience in the field of Spatial Planning and Development
- Analysis of the relevance of the ESDP and other policy documents, particularly with regard to their relevance for the Northern Periphery Area.

Project activities

The work in each region will address a number of themes (employment, energy, (de)population, nature conservation, economic development; tourism; transport; and urban-rural migration) allowing complementarity across the project as a whole. From a planning and policy viewpoint, key issues include: parallel planning and policy processes; conflicting interests between and across sectors; area-based vs. strategic plans. However, there are considerable differences in the spatial scale of, and responsibilities for, planning between countries. The project will focus on the process of aligning priorities through participatory processes to bring together diverse stakeholders' data, policies, strategies, and aspirations to support clearer frameworks for spatial development at the regional scale, rather than the production of plans per se. A central need is to bring together those concerned/involved with physical planning with those concerned/involved in (regional) economic development. The project will include three work packages:

Work package 1: inventory/mapping of data, policies & strategies; consultation on priorities for spatial planning; consultation on priorities for spatial planning, evaluation of complementarities, contradictions & conflicts; compilation of case studies & synthesis of previous experience in region.

Work package 2: evaluation of good practice/experience in other regions; seminar to compare experiences & workshop to define remainder of WP 2; study tours between partner regions; meetings to develop toolbox; final workshop

Work package 3: project management

Expected results

Intermediate outcomes for each region will include:

- Inventory of data for large-scale spatial planning, including gap analysis
- Review of GIS in regional spatial planning
- Evaluation of policies/strategies at spatial scales from the local to the EU
- Overview of, and lessons learned from, recent and ongoing participatory approaches to spatial/regional planning
- Definition of strategies for the region and how to align them
- Skills and capacity development for key individuals through study tours to other regions

It is further anticipated that the project outcomes will contribute to inter-regional cooperation in the next Programming Period (2007-2013), and will be relevant to many EU Member States in the context of territorial cohesion. The participatory development and implementation of integrated management plans will benefit local communities and all stakeholders (government, private, NGO, research, political decision-makers) in the management of public resources.

Partners

UHI Millennium Institute - Scotland
Nordland Research Institute - Norway
Icelandic Regional Development Institute - Iceland
Regional Council of North Karelia - Finland
County Council of Västernorrland - Sweden
Swedish Business Development Agency, NUTEK - Sweden
Association of Local Authorities of Västernorrland - Sweden
Municipality of Kramfors - Sweden
Municipality of Örnsköldsvik - Sweden
Mid Sweden University - Sweden
Nordregio - Sweden
Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations - Scotland
National Planning Agency in Iceland - Iceland
University of Joensuu - Finland

Measure

3.2

Total Budget

1 885 680

NPP Award

751 589

Project Period

01/03/2005 – 31/12/2007

Countries Involved

Sweden, Scotland, Norway,
Finland, Iceland

Lead Partner

Organisation

County Administrative
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Project leader

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