Globalization & Strategic Spatial Planning

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Topic for consideration

‘Spatial concepts and mega-city regions’

Exploring the intersections between:

Globalization, Spatial & Strategic Planning

1. Conceptual frame

Two foci: (I) the ‘global‘ (II) the ‘mega-city region’

- These are explored in GaWC ‘world city network analysis’ (WCN)
- But it is important to be aware that scales are not discrete or independent of each other in globalization (Cochrane, Pain 2000)
- WCN research informs understanding of the mutual constitution of scales required for effective strategic spatial planning responses
- GaWC focus: Empirical analysis of emergent relational spaces
- Informs practice: e.g. the 2003-06 North West Europe Interreg IIIB study ‘Polynet: Sustainable Management of European Polycentric Mega-City Regions’ (Hall, Pain 2006) –
POLYNET eight NWE regions

ESDP priority ‘polycentricity’: morphology, flows, function
2. Process

- Quantitative and qualitative interview and policy studies
- Reveal *city-region process distinctions* (invisible in the absence of relational/flow data)
- Two types of MCR process identified: *global functional expansion* (e.g. SE England) v *regional sectoral specialization* (e.g. RhineRuhr Germany)
- Implications for ESDP-Lisbon priorities:
  
  - *Sustainability – Economic, Environmental, Social ...*
  - *Balanced development ... Territorial Cohesion ...*
  - *EU global competitiveness*
• Western orientation of functional development

• Counter to UK (ODPM) Sustainable Communities Strategy
The Randstad

- Polycentric urban region
- Less globally interconnected
- How sustainable?
Global functions concentrated
NW Europe ‘gateway’ inter-linkages 2000

- Lisbon – ESDP contradiction
- PURs v. Gateway functional concentration
- Practitioner confusion!
3. Spatial planning practice

“... largely a public sector function to influence the future spatial distribution of activities. It aims to create a more rational territorial organization of land uses and the linkages between them, to balance demands for development with the need to protect the environment, and to achieve social and economic objectives.”


BUT has a **different meaning** from the re-conceptualization of **space as relational** - the ‘spatial turn’ (Massey, Allen, Sarre, 1999, *Human Geography Today*)... EU ‘space shaping’ is a territorial function/practice – **policies nested but how strategic?**
European-global city relations, 2008
Three key flow infrastructures

- Business structures
- Transportation structures
- Governance structures

- Problem of **territorialization** and **groundedness** of planning
- **Supports** but does not **produce** economic connectivity
- **Political boundaries** + **timescales**, e.g. UK ‘localism’!
- Question: How to achieve frames of governance for strategic planning which replicate emergent functional geographies?
4. Monitoring

Latest research extensions:

- New ESRC global analysis with Ghent, Belgium + CASS, Beijing
- EU-wide analysis including new flow data with IGEAT, Brussels
ESPON 2013 Priority 1- Globalization

‘TIGER: Territorial impact of globalization for Europe and its regions’

- Globalization and its spatial pattern
- Territorial structure in the globalization process
- Impacts of globalization on European territories
- Economic, financial, knowledge, migratory, maritime, air
- Political cooperation and networks, policy options
- Reading role – ‘EU cities in the global space of flows’
‘TIGER’

Lead Partner *Université Libre de Bruxelles, IGEAT*, with:

- UK: *University of Reading, Real Estate & Planning*
- France: *CNRS, Unité mixte de recherche / Identité et Différenciation des Espaces, de l'Environnement et des Sociétés*
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