Towards a Polycentric Europe
European Spatial Perceptions

The Blue Banana
Brunet, 1989

A Bunch of Grapes
Kunzmann & Wegener, 1991
Economic Imbalances

Core area of the EU:

- Pentagon of the metropolises of London, Paris, Mailand, München and Hamburg
- 40% of the population
- 20% of the territory
- 50% of the EU GDP

Gross Domestic Product 1995

Source: Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (BBR)
Traffic Intensity

Source: Institut d’Estudis Territorials (IET)

Europa 2000
IMD (veh./dia)
AADT (veh./day)
DJM (veh./jour)

Project part-financed by the European Union
Objectives of the ESDP

- Economic and social cohesion
- Conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage
- More balanced competitiveness of the European territory
ESDP Objective 1

Balanced and polycentric urban system and a new urban-rural relationship

- Polycentric and balanced spatial development in the EU
- Dynamic, attractive and competitive cities and urbanised regions
- Indigenous development, diverse and productive rural areas
- Urban-rural partnership

Source: Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (BBR)
Parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge

- An integrated approach for improved transport links and access to knowledge
- Polycentric development model: a basis for better accessibility
- Efficient and sustainable use of the infrastructure
- Diffusion of innovation and knowledge

Source: Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (BBR)
ESDP Objective 3

Sustainable development, prudent management and protection of nature and cultural heritage

- Natural and cultural heritage as a development asset
- Preservation and development of the natural heritage
- Water resource management
- Creative management of cultural landscapes
- Creative management of the cultural heritage

Source: Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (BBR)
European Spatial Planning Network - ESPON

ESPON 1.1.1- Potentials for Polycentric Development in Europe

Objective: Provide the background for a more informed discussion of polycentric development in Europe.
ESPON Key Concepts on Polycentricity

Dimensions:

• **Size:** A polycentric urban system should *not be dominated by one large city*.

• **Location:** A *uniform distribution of cities across a territory* is more appropriate for a polycentric urban system than a highly polarised one where all major cities are clustered in one part of the territory.

• **Connectivity:** In a polycentric system, both small and large FUAs have *good accessibility at all scales*. The more accessible lower-level centres are compared to the primary city, the less monocentric is the urban system.
ESPON Functional Urban Areas (FUA‘s)

Feature / Functions Measured variable

- **Mass function:** Population (>20,000 pop)
- **Transport function:** Airport (>50,000 px), ports (container traffic >20,000TEU)
- **Tourism function:** Number of beds in hotels (and similar)
- **Industrial function:** Gross ‘value added’ in industry
- **Knowledge functions:** Location of university, number of students
- **Decision-making centre:** Location of top 500 companies
- **Administrative functions:** Administrative status of FUA
### FUA’s - Database

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ESPON Functional Urban Areas (FUA’s)

Knowledge function

- Knowledge nodes of European significance (50,000-250,000 students)
- Large higher education institutions (fewer than 250,000 students)
- Medium-sized higher education institutions (500-10,000 students)
- Regional higher education institutes (less than 500 students)

Industrial function

- Global industry node (more than 20 billion Euro in GVA)
- Strong industrial significance (7.5-20 billion Euro in GVA)
- Medium industrial FLA (5-7.5 billion Euro in GVA)
- Minor industry or no industry (less than 1 billion Euro)

Geographical base: Eurostat GIS

Source: Eurostat, National Statistical Offices

PROJECT PART-FINANCED
BY THE EUROPEAN UNION
• The definition of the European core as ‘the Pentagon’ is too narrow. In terms of population and dense city networks, Manchester, Berlin, Venice, Genoa and Paris define the corners of the European core.

• Europe might be considered as comprising 18 broad inter regional areas, within which and between which polycentric relationships need to be developed to achieve in the longer term a better urban balance.

• The European connectivity has improved, and will continue to improve, markedly thanks, in part to the TENT and TINA programmes.
An issue for PolyMETREXplus is for project partners and contributors to consider their polycentric social, economic and environmental relationships within the broad framework of the 18 inter regional tiles and transnational balancing areas, having regard to the directions evident from the TENT and TINA programmes, and to define their perceptions and intentions for the future.

Put simply:
Imagine the opportunities/threats that this future could hold and the mutually beneficial polycentric relationships that might be able to be built.
Some Key Questions on Polycentrism (I)

**Analysis:**

• How can polycentricity be defined in a way that makes it measurable?

• Are there trends towards more polycentricity or towards more polarisation?

**Evaluation:**

• Is polycentricity desirable?

• Are polycentric systems more efficient and more competitive?

• Does polycentricity increase spatial cohesion?

• Is it good for the environment?

• Are there disadvantages, such as agglomeration dis-economies, marginalisation of peripheral areas or more traffic and congestion?
Some Key Questions on Polycentrism (II)

**Policy analysis:**
- What should be done?
- Should one strengthen medium centres or support peripheral areas?
- Which policies are available – taxation, regulation, subsidies, infrastructure?

**Forecasting:**
- What would be the impacts of such policies?
- What would be their effects not only on polycentricity but also on regional competitiveness and economic performance, on spatial cohesion and on the environment?

**Implementation:**
- How can the policies be implemented?
But, What does “Polycentrism” Mean??…

WIKIPEDIA:
Polycentrism is the principle of organisation of a region around several political, social or financial centres. A county or region is said to be polycentric if its population is distributed almost evenly among several centres in different parts of the county. An example of a polycentric city is the Ruhr area in Germany: Today, the area is a large city that grew from a dozen smaller cities. As a result, the "city" has no single centre, but several.

ALLWORDS.COM
Polycentrism is the condition of having, or the tendency to have, many ideological or political centres.
But, What does “Polycentrism” Mean??…

INTERIM TERRITORIAL COHESION REPORT – DG Regional Policy, 2004

• At the European/transnational level, the main issue is to **stimulate the development of regions beyond the “Pentagon”**.

• At the national/cross-border/interregional level, the challenge is to **shift from the dominance of one (often capital) city to a more balanced network of cities**.

• At the regional/local level, the challenge is to move from one or two dominant regional centers to **several small and medium sized centers providing regional services**.

PMP+: Is essentially a concept that recognises the benefits that can be gained through the linking of urban areas to create markets for the higher-level services, activities and functions required to sustain competitive urban life.
Some “Fresh” Ideas on Spatial Development…

AGROTOUR: SLO & CRO & A & H cross-border region

LINKS: RYANEUROPE
the link as generator of the territory

CONSTANTRECOMBINATIONS

DENSE CITIES

NOVAISTRIA 2010 CROSSBORDER MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT HUB

http://www.iaacat.com/
AGROTOUR · SLO & CRO & A & H cross.border region

- infrastructures
- geographical location
- natural conditions for agriculture
- educational facilities
- labour force
- food-processing industries
- quality landscape
- cultural heritage
- tourism facilities

- peripheral location
- underdevelopment
- unemployment
- decrease of population
- uncompetitiveness

POLYMETREXplus INTERREG IIIC project
Bologna, 25-27 June, 2006

PROJECT PART-FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION
DENSE CITIES

cross border actions
 eurotunnel case study
the role of specific connectors in eurotunnel diagnostic
a new scheme for europe
new centers of development

800 km diameter = 2.0 d.f.

800 km diameter = 3.5 d.f.

800 km diameter = 5.0 d.f.

comparitive study of new dense cities
Thanks for your time...

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