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THE ESTABLISHMENT AND RETERRITORIALIZATION OF PLANNING DISTRICTS IN SOUTH DAKOTA AS A RESPONSE TO ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

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Abstract: Rural areas in South Dakota have been experiencing population decline over the last forty years. This has reduced tax revenues of small town and cities, in turn reducing the abilities of local governments to provide services. The concurrent rise in federal monies and federal policies has caused many local communities to reterritorialize into planning districts that are quasi-government in nature. These planning districts bring together the resources and talents of local communities to obtain much needed federal monies through grants. This is an examination of this process and its effects within South Dakota.

Key Words: *reterritorialization, planning districts, grants.*

Introduction

With a land area of 199,773 square kilometers, South Dakota is almost as large as Romania with its 238,391 square kilometers (Fig. 1). However, its population of 814,180 inhabitants (2010 census) is much smaller than that of Romania's 20,121,641 inhabitants (2011 census). With a small overall population, South Dakota's cities and towns likewise have small populations. For example, the largest city, Sioux Falls, has a population of only 153,888 inhabitants (2010). In addition and more importantly, most of South Dakota's populated areas are shrinking despite overall population growth for the state. For example, South Dakota's ten largest cities accounted for 34 percent of the state's total population in 1970 (South Dakota State Historical Society 2010, United States Census Bureau 2013). Their share increased to 44 percent by 2010 (Table 1). While the state's overall population increased 22 percent over this 40-year period, the largest city, Sioux Falls, increased 112 percent and the second largest city, Rapid City, grew 55 percent. It means that the robust growth rates of the largest cities came at the expense of the smaller towns. Indeed, 223 of South Dakota's 309 towns and cities, that is 72 percent, experienced population decline. More than 14 percent suffered a 50 percent or greater population decline (Fig. 2). Generally, the smaller the town, the greater the population decline. Of the small towns that grew, many were near the larger cities, meaning that they were effectively transformed into suburbs of the larger cities. The other small towns that grew were primarily along South Dakota's two major transportation corridors (Interstates 29 and 90).

Low numbers of inhabitants means smaller tax bases, which in turn result in fewer monies to provide services. The added difficulty of declining populations has meant that many of the already small budgets are shrinking. Population losses also have resulted in a phenomenon known as "rural brain drain," the loss of talented and skilled individuals to bigger cities (Carr and Kelafas 2010, Janezich 2011). This phenomenon has added to the challenges of providing services. In sum, the general problem that small towns confront in providing services is compounded in many cases by dramatic population decline. This has forced small communities

to develop new strategies, one of which is to pool resources. In other words, communities contribute portions of their budgets to a new and shared fund that is large enough to pay for new organizations and staff to provide services.

Fig. 1 - **South Dakota: Counties, Ten Most Populous Cities, and Major Interstate Highways**

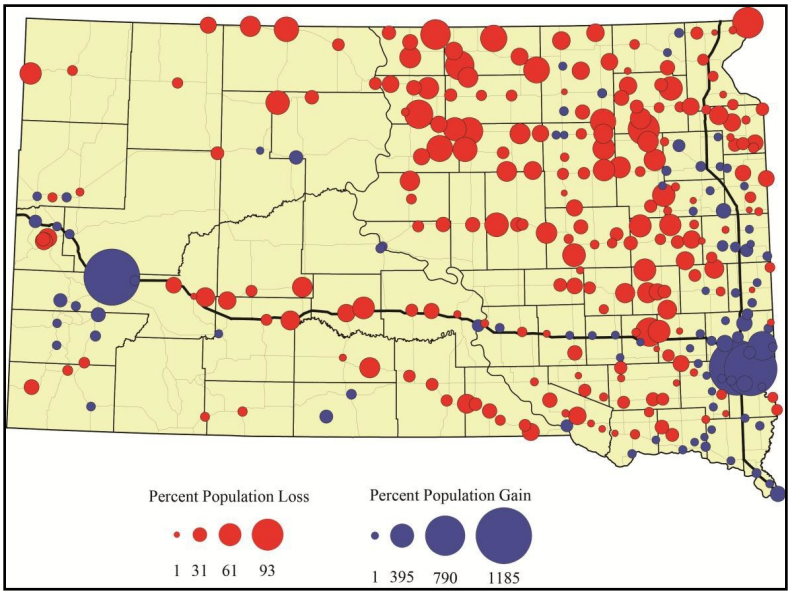

Fig. 2 - **South Dakota: Population Change in Towns and Cities, 1970 to 2010**

Table 1

Population Change of South Dakota's Ten Most Populous Cities

	1970	2010	% Change
South Dakota	**665,507**	**814,180**	**22**
Sioux Falls (city)	72,488	153,888	112
Rapid City (city)	43,836	67,956	55
Aberdeen (city)	26,476	26,091	-1
Brookings (city)	13,717	22,056	61
Watertown (city)	13,388	21,482	60
Mitchell (city)	13,425	15,254	14
Yankton (city)	11,919	14,454	21
Pierre* (city)	9,699	13,646	41
Huron (city)	14,299	12,592	-12
Vermillion (city)	9,128	10,571	16
Top Ten Total	**228,375**	**357,990**	**57**
% of Total	**34%**	**44%**	
*Capital			

Materials and Methods

These problems that South Dakota faces are not unusual. In fact, they are quite common for many states. A number of studies have examined the various aspects of rural development. In doing so, some have focused on new forms of rural governance (Clark et al. 2007, Connelly et al. 2006, Goodwin 1998, Little 2001, Marshall 2001, Wiskerke et al. 2003). Others have considered broader regional reterritorialization (Hamin and Marcucci 2008, Harrison 2006, Jonas and Pincetl 2006, Ward and Brown 2009). Some have considered both governance and reterritorialization practices through international comparisons (Derkzen 2010, Furmankiewicz et al. 2010, MacLeod 2001, Pezzini 2001). A few studies have examined developments in the American Midwest (Lu and Jacobs 2013, Norris-Baker 1999). However, the actual process of an evolving territorialization within South Dakota as a response to both the economic challenges resulting from rural decline and changing federal policies to deal with such challenges nationally has not been thoroughly examined. An analysis of this process and its effects in South Dakota is the focus of this study. For materials, this study draws on historical documents. The employed then reveals the facts that explain the creation and territorial evolution of the existing planning districts.

Results and Discussion

Currently, the pooling of local monies in South Dakota is manifested partly in six planning districts. Their territorial boundaries are comprised of counties (Fig. 3) though their constituents are towns and their projects likewise are oriented to towns. As seen in Table 2, the planning districts group the populations of the counties to make districts of larger populations with more resources. Information and data illustrating this process is drawn from the six planning districts as examples. A historical perspective helps to explain current structure and dynamics.

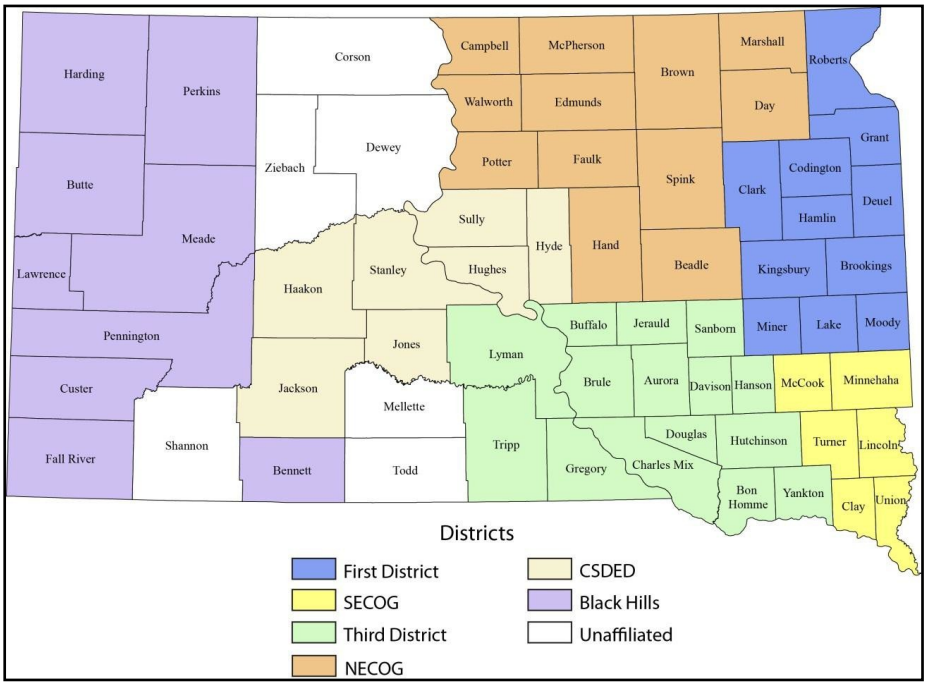

Fig. 3 - **South Dakota: Current Territorialization of Planning and Development Districts**

Table 2

South Dakota: Basic Characteristics of the Planning and Development Districts

Name	Number of Counties	Population	% of State Total Pop.	Land Area (km²)	% of State Total Land Area
First District	11	115,878	14	20,772	10
District III	15	99,790	12	30,874	15
NECOG	12	92,268	11	35,329	18
SECOG	6	256,524	32	8,987	4
Black Hills Council	9	183,567	23	50,247	25
CSED	7	28,755	4	23,144	12
Unaffiliated District	6	37,398	5	30,420	15
Total	66	814,180	100	199,773	100

The concern for urban and regional planning and community development was expressed by the federal government in Washington D.C. in the 1950s and 1960s through legislation that provided government grants but also increasingly required the participation of state and local governments. Three of the earliest and most notable legislative pieces were the Housing Act of 1954, the Housing Act of 1959, and the Interstate Highway and Defense Act of 1956 (Beville et

al. 1984: 1). By providing federal monies for specific projects, namely housing and transportation, these acts fostered the creation of regional planning by requiring communities to work together on large projects. More comprehensive regional planning was encouraged in 1966 when the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act was enacted and provided funds for more than 30 discrete federal grant and loan programs in multiple areas such as construction activities and open space land acquisition. As other government programs emerged, the number of federal programs providing funds for development projects increased dramatically (Doeksen et al. 1975: iii, State Planning Agency 1970: 3). One report noted that 81 programs with planning requirements were "administered by 40 different administrative program offices in 11 different departments, according to 59 separate sets of administrative regulations" (Muchmore and Fitzgerald 1973: 6). Furthermore, these offices were spread throughout the United States, requiring South Dakota's officials to travel long distances in a variety of directions. For example, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has offices in Chicago; the Department of Commerce had field offices in Minneapolis; field offices for the Department of the Interior were in Billings, Montana; the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's offices were in Kansas City (Muchmore and Fitzgerald 1973: 8).

In addition to the complexity of federal programs, existing laws, policies, and procedures discouraged local jurisdictions from working together. To remove many of the barriers, the federal government passed the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act (ICA) of 1967 (Beville et al. 1984: 1, Office of Management and Budget 1969). This Act also helped local community leaders to manage federal grants and integrate them into state and local programs and policies. The ICA was implemented through A-95, a directive issued in 1969 by the Federal Bureau of the Budget (which later became the Office of Management and Budget) (Gordon 1974, Office of Management and Budget 1976). By regularizing procedures, A-95 provided the mechanisms for state and local governments to better work with one another. Most notably, it empowered state governors to create multi-county districts (Doeksen et al. 1975: 1-2). A-95 also created the Project Notification and Review System (PNRS), which required federal agencies to notify states of their programs' details. The PNRS also required applicants at the sub-state levels to obtain approval from their states' "clearing houses" before forwarding their applications to Washington D.C. (State Planning Agency 1970: 25). In short, ICA and A-95 facilitated cooperation through a framework and hierarchy of levels of state and local governments.

One other piece of federal legislation of this period greatly influenced the development of regional and community planning in South Dakota. This was the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966, more commonly known as Model Cities. It was a federal aid program that was part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. The intent of Model Cities was to alleviate poverty in cities through planning (Encyclopedia of Chicago 2005). Though not directly related to issues in South Dakota, it was a catalyst for a parallel proposal known as Model Rural Development, which was initially proposed by President Nixon when he attended a meeting in Fargo, North Dakota in 1970 (State Planning Agency 1970: 76). The intent of Model Rural Development was to improve the quality of life in rural area through the combined efforts and resources of state and federal governments. It came about through the Rural Development Act of 1972 (Nixon 1972).

The new legislation, acts, policies, and procedures not only encouraged the creation of multi-county planning organizations, they significantly reversed the way in which federal monies were dispersed. Previously, states and local communities only could react to federal projects

imagined and constructed in Washington D.C. The changes reversed significant aspects of the process: the obtainment of federal funds was contingent upon local input. This gave local communities a significant role in the development of regional planning projects (Binkley and Tabors 1980, Warren 1970, Williams 1983). It also led to the proliferation of regional development districts (Grossman 1973).

New federal monies created many new economic development opportunities for state and local communities, but the rules and regulations associated with these monies presented challenges that far exceeded the abilities of most communities. This problem was addressed as states grouped their communities into larger territorial entities to pool resources and talent to obtain federal monies, which was precisely the intent of federal legislation and policies. Governor Boe of South Dakota began this process when he laid the groundwork for the State Planning Agency in 1966: "for better coordination of all programs in State Government stemming from Federal sources and requiring planning as a prerequisite for receiving grants" (State Planning Agency 1970: 10-11). The State Legislature created and funded the Agency with House Bill 501 (State Planning Agency 1970: 10, 15). The Agency came under an Advisory Commission comprised of department heads and members of other commissions, totaling 24 individuals. As federal programs grew, Boe's successor, Governor Frank Farrar saw the need to reorganize the State Planning Agency in 1969, centralizing it into a more cohesive unit.

South Dakota responded to new federal programs with its own Model Rural Development Program in 1971 (Beville et al. 1984: 2, Doeksen et al. 1975: 44, Muchmore and Fitzgerald 1973: 5, South Dakota State Planning Agency 1971, 1973). This Program led to the development of Planning and Development Districts (P&DD). Using South Dakota's Codified Law (also known as Joint Powers Statutes), Governor Farrar issued an executive order on 4 December 1970 mandating the creation of six multi-county planning and development districts by 1 July 1971 (Beville et al. 1984: 2, Doeksen et al. 1975: 44, Planning and Development – District III. 2013a)[1)]. Four criteria were used to delineate the territories of the Planning Districts: 1) newspaper circulation; 2) minimum traffic volumes; 3) district trade areas; and 4) state economic areas (South Dakota State Planning Agency 1970: 61-74). The criteria yielded six Planning Districts, named "First" through "Sixth" respectively (Fig. 4).

The Districts were identified on a map, but they required local organization. This meant that they did not all come into being simultaneously. The state government gave priority to First District so that it could serve as a Model Rural Development District of the new Model Rural Development Program and thereby receive federal funding to pay for its professional staff (Beville et al. 1984: 2). Thus, First District became the pilot district. It was created in March 1971 by the State Planning bureau and called the First Planning and Development District (Doeksen et al. 1975: 44, First District Association of Local Governments 2013a). In July 1971, the boards of commissioners of 10 counties approved a Joint Cooperative Agreement that established the district's organization and designated Watertown as the headquarters (South Eastern Council Of Local Governments SECOG 2010). With the establishment and successful operation of First District, Governor Richard Kneip brought into operation the other planning districts at six-month intervals (Muchmore and Fitzgerald 1973: 15). The following is a list of the other five districts, their intended origination dates, and their adopted new names:

1) South Dakota's use of the word "District" is "synonymous with 'Region' and means a "Multi-Jurisdictional Area" (South Dakota State Planning Agency 1970: 59).

Second District (July 1972): South Eastern Council of (Local) Governments (SECOG)[2] (2013c).

Third District (1973): Planning and Development – District III (2013d).

Fourth District (January 1973): Northeast Council of (Local) Governments (NECOG) (2013e).

Fifth District (1974): Fifth District Planning and Development Committee.

Sixth District (January 1972): Black Hills Council of Local Governments (2013a).

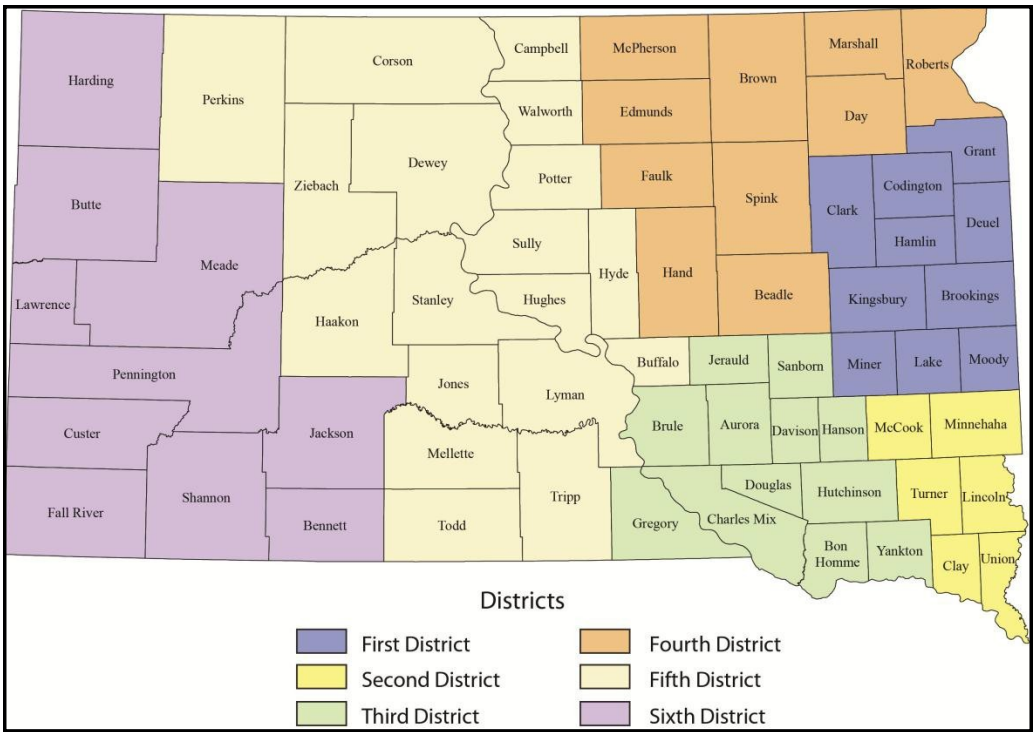

Fig.4 - **South Dakota: Original Territorialization of Planning and Development Districts.**

These Planning Districts made it possible to receive federal funds such as "701-Comprehensive Planning Assistance" grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) (2013, Doeksen et al. 1975: 45, Muchmore and Fitzgerald 1973: 15-16). However, other federal agencies also required the existence of multi-county jurisdictional units before they would be awarded federal monies (Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1973: 185, 221-252). Thus, South Dakota's six Planning Districts were structured in a way that also satisfied the requirements of other federal agencies. An example includes the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA). For example,

2) SECOG also developed from an earlier incarnation. In 1968, six townships in Minnehaha County surrounding Sioux Falls and two northern townships in Lincoln County formed the Greater Sioux Falls Regional Planning Commission. Eventually, the remaining townships in Minnehaha and Lincoln counties were included and in 1970, the Sioux Empire Council of Governments (SECOG) was created (http://www.secog.org/secog_information/history.htm, Accessed 26 August 2013].

First District also became an Economic Development Districts (EDD) in May 1973 (Doeksen et al. 1975: 44). Since then, all the other Planning Districts have become EDDs (U.S. Economic Development Administration EDA 2013). Three of the Districts are also Councils of Governments: Northeast Council of Local Governments (NECOG), Planning and Development – District III, and South Eastern Council of Local Governments (SECOG) (National Association of Regional Councils 2013, Wikstrom 1977: 16-18). South Dakota's two largest cities created Sioux Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization and Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization respectively.

While still in their infancy, the potential importance of South Dakota's Planning Districts was soon established following the Rapid City flood disaster that occurred on 9 June 1972 within four counties of District VI. At the time, District VI was only a few months old with only a few staff members and very little funding (Muchmore and Fitzgerald 1973: 16-17). Immediate concern was for rescue, food, shelter, and debris removal. Nevertheless, the concern grew for a long-range strategy for reconstruction. This concern was fueled by state officials in California and West Virginia, two states that recently experienced natural disasters. These states benefited from emergency response but they continued to suffer problems, which they attributed to a lack of long-term planning. Recognizing the need to address long-term problems, the Office of the President of the United States issued an "Order to the Mountain Plains Federal Regional Council and to the Office of Emergency Preparedness" to directly work with regional planning agencies and provide grants-in-aid to invest in urban renewal, water and sewer restoration, and other projects to restore a substantial portion of the $150 million property loss and damaged suffered in District VI's four counties (Muchmore and Fitzgerald 1973: 16-17). All this required a monumental planning effort and was funded primarily by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA). The rapid infusion of large sums of federal monies quickly and fully converted District VI from a skeletal framework with few staff members and no established track record of completed and successful projects to a fully operational and robust planning district. District VI soon became a model for disaster response as state and local official from several eastern states visited and examined its operations after Hurricane Agnes hit the eastern seaboard in the latter part of June 1972. Federal representatives went to the Hurricane Agnes disaster area to explain how a coordinated effort of local, state, and federal agencies was implemented through District VI to respond to the Rapid City flood.

South Dakota's six Planning Districts have multiple identities that make them appear to be exceedingly complex. This results from the fact that there are numerous federal agencies providing grants with each having its own requirements concerning the structures of the receiving planning agencies. Rather than having numerous planning agencies, South Dakota's planning districts are designed with the flexibility to meet the requirements of the various federal agencies. Thus, despite their apparent complexity, their designs actually are streamlined and efficient because they are the minimization of the creation of multiple organizations with overlapping interests and responsibilities. Indeed, many of them have the same planning staffs though they have governing bodies at assume differing configurations for each function they serve. In other words, the Districts' multiple identities allow them to pool resources rather than stretch them as the Districts help to draw in federal monies to local governments while working with state agencies, other governmental agencies, and private industry. Figure 5 below indicates the central role that the Planning Districts play in obtaining funds and coordinating projects.

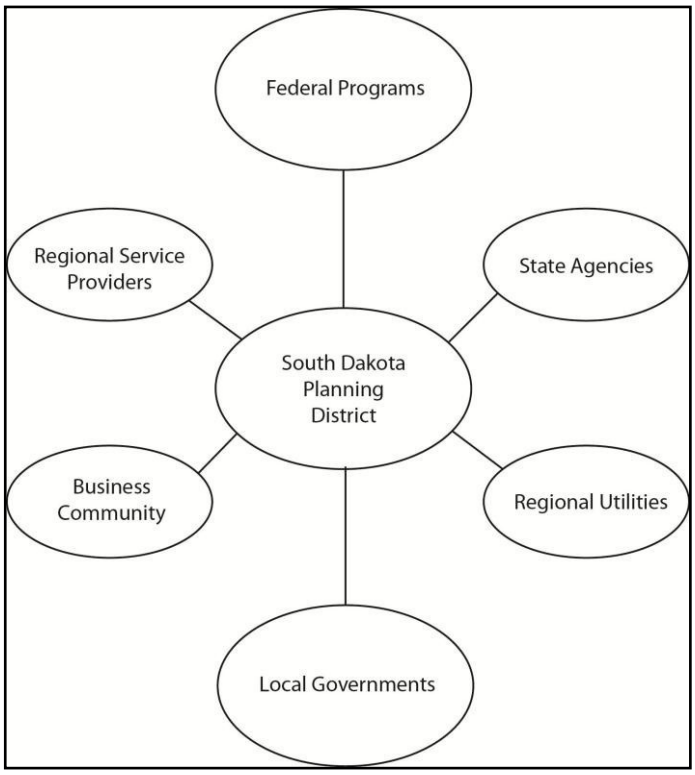

Fig. 5 - **South Dakota: Original Territorialization of Planning and Development Districts**
(Adopted from Figure I-4, Central South Dakota Enhancement District. 2013b)

The important fact to note about all these multi-county districts is that they are quasi-governmental in nature and purely voluntary. They have no legal, regulatory, or taxing authorities and cannot require local governments to implement or comply with policies (First District Association of Local Governments 2013b, Muchmore and Fitzgerald 1973: 16-17). Membership in them is purely voluntary with the districts' finances funded in large part through combinations of grants, dues, and services fees. Dues are determined by the population sizes of communities. In many of South Dakota's Planning Districts, some communities simply choose not to participate. It also has meant that some counties have opted to change membership. A comparison of the maps in Figures 3 and 4 illustrates these changes. For example, Roberts County in the far northeastern part of the state switched from NECOG to First District. Most notably, Fifth District was disbanded in 1983 (Central South Dakota Enhancement District 2013b: 2). Subsequently, many of its former member counties joined neighboring Districts. Perkins and Bennett became part of Black Hills Council. Campbell, Walworth, and Potter joined NECOG (Northeast Council of Local Governments (NECOG) 2013c). Buffalo, Lyman, and Trip became part of District III. Corson, Ziebach, Dewey, Mellette, and Todd are no longer members of any District. In 1999, the remaining counties of the former Fifth District began to organize a new District, which eventually became the Central South Dakota Enhancement District (CSDED) that exists today (Central South Dakota Enhancement District 2013a). In May 2000, a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was

written (Knutson et al. 2012) and in December 2006, CSED became an Economic Development District (EDA) like the five other

Planning Districts[3)]

Each Planning District has its own governing structure. For example, First District is overseen by a board known as the "Governing Body," which has one county commissioner, one elected municipal representative, and one at-large member from each of the 11 member counties (First District Association of Local Governments 2013a). The chairman of the Santee Sioux Tribe and the chairman Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe are also members of the Governing Body. Similarly, the Central South Dakota Enhancement District (CSDED) has a "Board of Directors" that serves as the District's governing body. However, in addition to having members from the seven counties of the District, CSDED's Board also has non-governmental members comprised of "Private Sector Representatives" and "Stakeholders" (Central South Dakota Enhancement District 2013b: 2-6). The Private Sector Representatives are from major businesses within the District. The Stakeholders are Ft. Pierre Chamber of Commerce and the Capitol University Center. The Board also has an "At-Large Representative," which is currently filled by a person from the "Disabled/Religion" category. With a total of 33 board members, governmental representatives comprise 60.6 percent of CSED's governing body, non-governmental representatives hold 36.4 percent of the seats, and the at-large representative position accounts for three percent of the board.

As noted previously, CSDED is also an Economic Development District (EDD). To directly address its role as an EDD, CSDED has an extended governing structure known as the CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) Committee (Central South Dakota Enhancement District 2013b: 3-6). The CEDS Committee is comprised of 18 members from the "Private Sector" (54.5 percent) and 15 members from "Representatives of Other Economic Interests" (45.5 percent). Currently, of the 18 Private Sector representatives, 10 of them are Private Sector Representatives of the CSDED's Board of Directors. Of the 15 members from the Representatives of Other Economic Interests, two are from CSDED's Board of Directors. Though the CSDED Board of Directors and the CEDS Committee share many members, the CEDS Committee is comprised of more private, economic interests than CSDED's Board of Directors.

District III is structured similarly in that the governing committee is comprised of 51 percent elected officials and the remainder is private interests. Its CEDS Committee is primarily private sector interests (Planning and Development – District III 2013b). The Northeast Council of Local Governments (NECOG) likewise has a similar structure for its governing body (Northeast Council of Local Governments (NECOG) 2013a: 1). The South Eastern Council of Local Governments (SECOG) also has a comparable design (South Eastern Council of Local Governments (SECOG) 2013a). However, it contains South Dakota's largest city, Sioux Falls, which is very metropolitan in character and function. It means that SECOG has both a rural and urban component to it. To deal with the differing issues, SECOG created two commissions: the Rural Commission and the Urbanized Commission (South Eastern Council of Local Governments SECOG 2013b). The latter is now known as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation planning.

The main function of the Planning Districts is to provide technical and professional assistance

3) Because Jackson County did not become a member of the CSDED until 2006, it was not officially included in the EDA designation until 2008.

to ultimately obtain monies from federal granting agencies. This is often accomplished through the preparation of grant applications. Early examples include transportation and housing which began with grant programs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) (2013) and the United States Department of Transportation (2013) in the 1950s and 1960s. Over time, the services expanded to include such areas as county and city comprehensive plans, capital improvements programming, tax increment district plans, survey development and administration, comprehensive land use plans, zoning and subdivision regulations, transportation plans, emergency planning and management, disaster and hazard mitigation, USDA Rural Development, solid waste management, land-water conservation, rural water systems, natural resource plans, and recreation plans (Fig. 5) (Black Hills Council of Local Governments 2013b, First District Association of Local Governments 2013d, 2013f, Northeast Council of Local Governments 2013b, Planning and Development – District III 2013e).

Fig. 5 - **Brookings, South Dakota: Innovation Campus**
This research park is located next to South Dakota State University. It combines scholarly knowledge from the university with investments from private industry. First District provided assistance to stakeholders in Brookings to obtain grants to build the infrastructure for the park
(Source: First District Association of Local Governments 2013g)

To provide these services, most of the planning districts have developed robust geographic information systems (GIS) services, which include GPS data collection, aerial photography, and mapping plans (Black Hills Council of Local Governments 2013b, Central South Dakota

Enhancement District 2013c, First District Association of Local Governments 2013c, Northeast Council of Local Governments 2013d, Planning and Development – District III 2013c).

The expanded scope of activities indicates that the planning districts are providing needed services. At the same, the planning districts have been highly successful in obtaining federal and state grants for their communities. For example, First District was able to obtain $7,227,417 in grants for Brookings County during the most recent five-year period, namely fiscal years 2008-2012. Considering that Brookings County and its communities paid $214,350 in membership dues, the investment return was $33.72 for every dollar that it paid in dues (First District Association of Local Governments 2013e). This also indicates that the planning districts are self-sustaining.

Conclusion

Administratively, the United States of America is divided into 50 states that are further subdivided into 3,144 counties and county-equivalents. There are also more than 30,000 municipalities. This territorial governing structure is generally effective in providing services to citizens. The large number of counties and county-equivalents and municipalities means that they are small in size and responsive to local needs. However, the advantages of numerous, small entities presents certain disadvantages, namely equally small financial resources and talent pools that address issues at particular scales. In some cases, states are too large and counties and municipalities are too small to effectively address certain issues. An intermediate territorial structure would best attend to these issues. The disadvantage of creating such a territorial structure would be another layer of government, specifically the large costs of another layer of bureaucracy plus all the complications an additional layer of bureaucracy would add to the administrative hierarchy and its functioning. In short, another layer of bureaucracy would cost not only large sums of money but also time. These costs can be avoided, or at least greatly minimized, by the alternative of multi- county districts that draw on county and municipal resources with the addition of minimal staff to coordinate and maximize the combined resources. Multi-county districts have been developed throughout the United States with the process and structure in South Dakota illustrated here. Like elsewhere, South Dakota's planning districts have been challenged by sparse funds and lack of interest by stakeholders, many of whom may be suspicious of any expansion of government including quasi-governmental structures like planning districts. The situation makes it difficult for the staffs of planning districts to prove their value when they have few funds to provide the services that would show their value. For example, Fifth District disbanded in 1983 and an effort to re-launch it did not begin until 1999. On the other hand, the Rapid City Flood of 1972 illustrated the value of Sixth District and helped it through a precarious beginning. Natural disasters aside, First District and the other districts were able to carefully invest their resources to leverage more resources to illustrate their value. Nevertheless, funding the districts has been a perpetual need, but the planning districts have so far continued finding funds and perpetuate their operations.

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ANALYSING ITALIAN REGIONAL PATTERNS IN GREEN ECONOMY AND CLIMATE CHANGE. CAN ITALY LEVERAGE ON EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY TO FACE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH CHALLENGES?

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Abstract: European cities and regions are facing the crucial challenge of greening their economy towards more sustainable patterns. Politicians and policy-makers should promote new policies for sustainable growth including renewables, greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency and biodiversity. All of these aspects can be considered as a boost for local and regional economy. In this regard, European countries and regions can benefit from the Europe 2020 Strategy which is defined as Europe's blueprint for a smart, sustainable and inclusive future, providing a ten year roadmap for growth and jobs. EU2020S was designed as a European exit strategy from the global economic and financial crisis in view of new European economic governance. This study discusses the above issues regarding Italy and intends to provide some answers on the perspectives of the new EU2020S. It draws from a research project supported by ESPON, the S.I.E.S.T.A. Project, focused on the territorial dimension of the EU2020S. Therefore, this paper aims at analyzing Italian regional patterns on climate change, green economy and energy within the context of EU2020S and at providing policy recommendations for better achieving the goals of the Strategy.

Key Words: *green economy, energy, climate change, Europe 2020, Italy*.

Introduction

Green economy is an emerging paradigm at the heart of the economic and political agenda of the majority of developed countries. The concept of green economy is directly related to climate change and energy efficiency that are environmental "problems" with clear political and social implications (Khor 2011). The sustainability question is gaining significance as a "global explosion" produced by the scarcity of vital resources (energy, land, water) and global warming appears to become more realistic and a crucial issue of growing interest among policy makers and economists after Rio +20 (Loorbach 2010, UNEP 2011). However, green economy is a complex concept that has not yet received an international consensus with scholars debating on the different interpretations and meanings of "green growth". Between those who argued that green growth is the best potential way out of the financial crisis and onto a sustainability paradigm (OECD 2009, Makower and Pike 2009, Bosselmann et al. 2012) and others who consider it just an oxymoron or paradox (Ulrich 2012, Van der Ploeg and Withagen 2013), it is a fact that even Europe has to face global challenges that impose strategic choices.

Europe is aware of the need to rethink the existing development model based on decades of resource intensive growth as well as to structurally change production patterns and consumption behaviours (EC 2010a). European Member States recently have decided to address these questions with a strong political response that can offer serious opportunities to

enhance sustainability in a short time, shift towards green economy, address local challenges and respond to or even reverse damaging trends (EC 2011d). After the “Lisbon Agenda” experience, considered by many economists, policy makers and scientists a failed strategy (Sapir et al. 2003, Kok 2004, Zgajewski and Hajjar 2005), in 2010 the European Commission launched a new strategy called “Europe 2020” as a European exit strategy from the global economic and financial crisis to help European cities and regions to change the model of growth by shifting towards a low-carbon economy. This Europe’s blueprint for a smart, sustainable and inclusive future is a ten year roadmap for growth and jobs and should improve territorial cohesion with structural sustainable reforms (EC 2010b).

In this context, Italy is a country that is struggling to plan a real transition to a sustainable and greener economy. As the findings reported in this work will demonstrate, Italian regions need a “transformational agenda” based on a long-term vision and consistent policies (from energy, transportation, sustainable agriculture to combating climate change, preserving biodiversity). Europe 2020 Strategy can be considered a crucial opportunity to make European regions and cities greener, smarter and inclusive. Can Italy leverage on this strategy to face sustainable growth challenges?

Drawing on the Espon Siesta Project “Spatial Indicators for a Europe 2020 Strategy Territorial Analysis”, which has analyzed the territorial dimension of the EU2020S through the elaboration of selected indicators at different territorial levels, this paper seeks to contribute to the current debate by presenting the main results about regional patterns in Italy on climate change, green economy and energy within the context of EU2020S and to provide policy recommendations for better achieving the goals of the Strategy. This paper presents the results of the work carried out by the Unit of Reggio Calabria so as to provide a “picture” of the current situation of Italy relatively to the sustainable growth pillar. Particular attention will be paid to GHG emissions, energy intensity of the economy, and renewable energy sources, since it is believed that the EU2020 Strategy headline targets of 20/20/20 can potentially have the wider impacts on the economy, cities, city users and behaviours of households and people in general. In conclusion, the importance of new policy measures concerning urban areas which are needed to achieve the sustainable growth pillar targets will also be stressed and highlighted.

Materials and Methods

The maps presented in this paper regard themes that have assumed great significance in the last decade such as climate change, global warming, green economy, energy efficiency. They are environmental issues with strong “economic value” because it’s increasingly clear the importance of the linkage between ecological, economic and social dimensions in the growing discussion in light of the environmental global crisis. As far as the sustainable growth pillar is concerned, the EU2020S primarily envisages that the European economy should maintain its leadership and competitiveness in the world through the delivery of new green processes and technologies that allow climate change to be combated and energy efficiency to be achieved. Main actions should be directed to further develop and use low-carbon technologies and renewable sources of energy. The EU2020S acknowledges that such an approach will prevent environmental degradation, biodiversity loss and unsustainable use of resources.

Regarding the concepts expressed above, the EU2020S actually has focused its pillar “sustainable growth” on economic growth rather than on a sustainability concept widely conceived. In our study we highlighted that the concept of sustainable growth by the EU2020S is far from conceptually clear. ‘Growth’ and ‘development’ are concepts that have stimulated a long debate among different academic perspectives. Scholars such as Daly stated that

"development" means qualitative improvements, particularly in resource efficiency, so that economic activities do not exceed the regenerative and absorptive capacities of the ecosystem. "Growth" means quantitative increase in the amount of energy and materials taken from the earth and processed through the economy, returning to the earth usually in the form of waste (Daly 1997). Other ones argued that 'sustainable' is usually referred to 'development' and not to 'growth' (Hopwood et al. 2005) though Ulhoi pointed out that the concept of sustainable development has become an empty catch phrase of contemporary environmentalism (Ulhoi and Madsen 1999) and Pearce argued that the sheer proliferation of definitions of sustainable development is evidence of its evanescence and contestability (Pearce et al. 1989). Several scholars argue that 'sustainable development' is a complex concept that indicates a lack of consistency in its interpretation and it is a contradiction in terms or an oxymoron that takes away from us any perspective of hope (Sharachchandra 1991, Meadows et al. 1992, Latouche 2004). On the other hand, not even the concept of "sustainable growth" is so coherent for some scholars as Daly and Townsend that have defined sustainable growth as an "impossibility theorem" that "when applied to the economy is a bad oxymoron - self-contradictory as prose, and unevocative as poetry" (Daly and Townsend 1993). Actually in the current debate sustainable growth is often used by policy and decision makers as synonym for sustainable development, probably due to a misunderstanding based on a superficial knowledge about the meaning of the sustainability concept.

However, the approach of Siesta project has been to consider both the economic dimension of sustainability as intended by the EU2020S and the ecological and environmental dimensions which cannot be underestimated in the evaluation of the performances and competitiveness of countries and regions. Within this complicated scientific framework, the Unit of Reggio Calabria decided to stress also environmental and ecological aspects to better understand the drivers of competitiveness and change. Indeed we dealt with the sustainable growth pillar through the identification of various indicators capable of measuring national and regional performances against the objectives of the pillar itself. Indicators were chosen by taking in consideration the EU2020s headline targets (20% reduction of GHG, 20% increase of RES, 20% reduction in energy consumption), the flagship initiative "Resource Efficient Europe" and other targets indirectly related to the EU2020S which express performances of industries with high energy spending, commuting, municipal waste collection, waste water treatment, protected areas under Natura 2000 and biodiversity loss. These indicators have been also graphically represented within 17 maps and produced with a clear link with the EU2020S in order to make conceptual sense within the Project as a whole.

In the context of the ESPON SIESTA Project, over 50 indicators have been elaborated, updated and analysed at different territorial levels, NUTS-0, NUTS-2 and NUTS-3, in order to determine a clear territorial picture of the EU-27 within the three pillars Sustainable Growth, Smart Growth and Inclusive Growth of the Europe 2020 Strategy. Indicators have been selected and data gathered with regard to many sectors ranging from regional GDP to energy intensity of the economy, waste treatment, RES, commuting, ICT investment, education, employment, poverty and exclusion and many more. It must be said that there were problems because of the general lack of environmental data at regional level and the controversial inclusion of aspects of economic growth under the umbrella of "sustainable growth". Secondly, and as there is no data on renewable energies at the regional level, it has been thought as useful to consider the potentials of wind energy and solar energy, as they may offer "future possibilities" in this respect; these data has been downloaded through ESPON 2013 DB, coming from ReRisk Project. Thirdly, for measuring sustainable development in relation to curbing greenhouse gas emissions, it is essential to take into account the transport sector and, in this respect, measurements on congestion have been introduced at NUTS2 level and a

particular indicator available at URBAN AUDIT (EUROSTAT) on commuting. SIESTA Project has systematically tried to develop the work at the larger scale, that is, NUTS 3 and urban areas, but only when this is possible in terms of data availability. This means that, when data is not available for NUTS3 or urban areas, then NUTS2 scale is used and, in some exceptional cases, NUTS1 or NUTS0.

Results and Discussion

The transition to an energy efficiency and green economy

By now there is strong evidence that human activities are consuming many natural resources and are causing global warming and changes in the climate system (Barnosky et al. 2012). The scientific community also warned that human activities need to be reconsidered in a way which will allow the regenerative capacity of these assets to function (IPPC Report 2013). For instance, emissions and other greenhouse gases (GHG) will need to be cut in order to avoid further devastating effects of climate change (Arnell et al. 2013).

European countries agree that reversing climate change and achieving energy efficiency are the overall policy priorities of the coming decades and that the gradual transformation towards a resource-efficient and low-carbon economy will be the decisive trend of the future. Clearly, these topics have an important economic relevance in as much as a cleaner environment and greener cities are costly (Butter and Verbruggen 1994, Meyer 1995, Brock and Taylor 2005). According to scientific evidence that shows an acceleration of climate change patterns and a deepening of the climate crisis (EWEA 2011), the EU as a whole must restructure strongly its economy and reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions by 25%-40% identified by the IPCC to give us a 50% chance of avoiding the 2°C temperature rise (IPCC 2007). So changing our current patterns of resource use relying mostly on renewables that is a sector in strong expansion (IEA Report 2012) and the transition towards the green economy is not a choice but a necessity (Whitehead 2007). Europe 2020 and its Roadmap for resource efficient Europe provide clear guidance (EC 2011c).

Addressing environmental concerns directly addresses economic problems. As it is known, Europe is facing a great financial crisis and problems of (urban) unsustainable development. By addressing climate change mitigation through the pursuit of sustainability pathways, it is increasingly necessary to build even stronger links between ecology and economy encouraging an integrated global approach that considers not only emissions reductions, resources efficiency and climate change policies, but also the drivers of unsustainable patterns of production and consumption (Edwards 2010). Moreover the path to more sustainable European cities and regions can generate an economic opportunity boosting, among other things, growth and job creation (Zysman and Huberty 2012).

A green transition of Europe as a whole should be exactly the way to recover from the financial crisis because green economy is a challenging opportunity for the European countries (EC 2011d). Regions and cities see the challenge as an opportunity to take our societies out of the global economic crisis transformed into more sustainable, low carbon, less resource intense and inclusive communities; as well as to exchange experiences and increase regional skills and competiveness towards a green economy. In this context, regions are particularly well placed for identifying the needs and the strengths of our societies in tackling climate change. Clearly, the overarching concept of a green economy recognizes that ecosystems, the economy and human well-being, and the related types of capital they represent, are intrinsically linked. At the core of these are the continued challenges of improving resource efficiency whilst

ensuring ecosystem resilience in the natural systems that sustain us (EC 2010c).

Our study show how Italy, and more in general all European countries, if really wants to become greener, more sustainable and equity and addresses new global challenges in a coherent, consistent and efficient manner, needs to act collectively against the climate change and for building a green economy (The Lisbon Treaty 2009). As the maps showed, there are more advanced countries in renewable energy consumption such as Norway and Sweden or in municipal waste collection such as the old MS, or in reduction of GHG emissions such as United Kingdom and Hungary, and on other hand, countries that have to make an effort to improve their situation (such as the new MS and candidate members). The more "organized" countries should help other countries with knowledge and technology transfer as well as various governance models. So the goal of sustainable growth can only be achieved with a concerted effort to improve the current situation. Just with a collective action there will be possible to fight climate change and change negative trends.

We believe that mostly these issues have to be addressed at regional and local levels. Regional development is usually considered very important for dealing with climate change, green economy and energy issues (Espon Climate 2011, OECD 2009, Stern 2006). Regional characteristics directly determine the extent to which EU regions can produce renewable energy. For example, the production of solar and wind energy is highly location-dependent. Coastal regions tend to have a high wind energy potential, while southern regions with more sunny days have more potential for solar energy. Moving renewable energy between regions with a high potential to regions with a high demand will require the development of better and more intelligent energy networks. In addition, regions and cities can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by promoting cleaner modes of public transport and shifting to more sustainable modes of transport. Initiatives to promote cleaner and more efficient transport have to adapt to the local context, focusing on the infrastructure in regions where it is still lacking while targeting the attractiveness of sustainable transport modes and demand management in other regions. Regions and cities can play a prominent role in fostering energy efficiency. This is particularly true in regards to buildings, where actions must adapt to the local context and climate. These actions are likely to be different between urban and rural areas or between places with old versus more recent buildings.

Regarding these points, Europe is strongly working to change the development model and move toward a more equal economy, balanced and respectful of a heritage to be passed on to future generations. Mostly the fight to tackle climate change, to improve resilience and to achieve the sustainable energy transition will be won or lost in cities because they generate around 75% of all CO_2 emissions because they host a high share of the population and an even higher share of economic activities, which is why cities need to be at the forefront of the fight against climate change (Register 2006). In addition, in Europe, approximately 375 million people live in urban regions and around 56% of the urban population – or 38% of Europe's population as a whole – lives in cities and towns of between 5.000 and 100.000 inhabitants (Committee of the Regions 2012). Consequently, it is evident that sustainable growth and climate change have a strong urban characterization because just here in the cities they are actually the most apparent in the everyday life, with stark impacts involving health, job, infrastructure, business and food. In this sense, cities are competing with each other because depend highly on other regions in Europe and beyond. So the city level has to be a major focus of attention if we want to address seriously the problems of environmental deterioration, global warming and climate change. Urban planning implications are reflected in buildings, streets and community design for more environmentally sustainable cities. Spatial planning is generally regarded to be responsible and capable to reduce regional vulnerability and to develop climate

mitigation and adaptation capacities against the impacts of climate change (Stern 2006, IPCC 2007). In addition, it is the right tool to shape local communities' future and make cities livable and resilient. The importance of addressing these problems by the local level is stressed also by the EU White Paper "Adapting to climate change: Towards a European framework for action" (EC 2009) when stated that "a more strategic and long-term approach to spatial planning will be necessary, both on land and on marine areas, including in transport, regional development, industry, tourism and energy policies".

Regional trends in Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and climate change related issues

The reduction of GHG emissions is clearly the most important environmental issue intrinsically linked with the way we live. Climate change is high on the international political agenda as the scientific proof of the human impact on climate becomes stronger (IPCC 2007a, 2007b) and as society is becoming aware of its potential consequences. One of the major goals of the EU2020S is to help the EU prosper in a low-carbon world and in a more competitive economy, preventing environmental degradation and biodiversity loss. This includes the reduction of GHG emissions, the promotion of renewable energies and more efficient energy supply systems. In this section we discuss the energy intensity of the economy indicator very briefly, although data are not available at the regional level, as one of the most important measures to reduce GHG emission and the estimated greenhouse gas emissions indicator elaborated within the SIESTA project as a way to highlight the trajectory that the Italian regions are currently following.

The energy intensity of the economy is a key indicator which measures the energy efficiency of a country's economy. Therefore, it is one of the most effective ways to meet energy needs, reduce energy costs and lower greenhouse gas emissions. A reduced and efficient consumption of energy is of paramount importance to achieve climate change targets and lower impacts on the environment. Italy as a whole is performing extremely well with regard to this indicator showing the forth lowest ratio of Kilograms of oil per 1000 Euros of GDP as in Table 1 below.

Table 1

5 EU-27 Member States (MS) with lower ratios of energy intensity of the economy (2010 year)

The five EU Member States with the lower ratio	
Country	***Ratio***
Denmark	105.19
United Kingdom	112.39
Ireland	112.65
Italy	140.84
Austria	142.41

The ratio is expressed in Kilograms of oil equivalent per 1000 EUR of GDP.
Source: Siesta Project elaboration

The energy intensity of the economy indicator should guide action of all Member States in achieving and delivering greater energy efficiency. The geographical pattern of the energy intensity indicator shows characteristics which are not surprising, highlighting a marked division between Western and Eastern Europe. New Member States such as Bulgaria, Romania and Estonia have very high energy intensity ratios, showing great potentials for large improvements

continuing on the paths of steady reduction (Fig. 1).

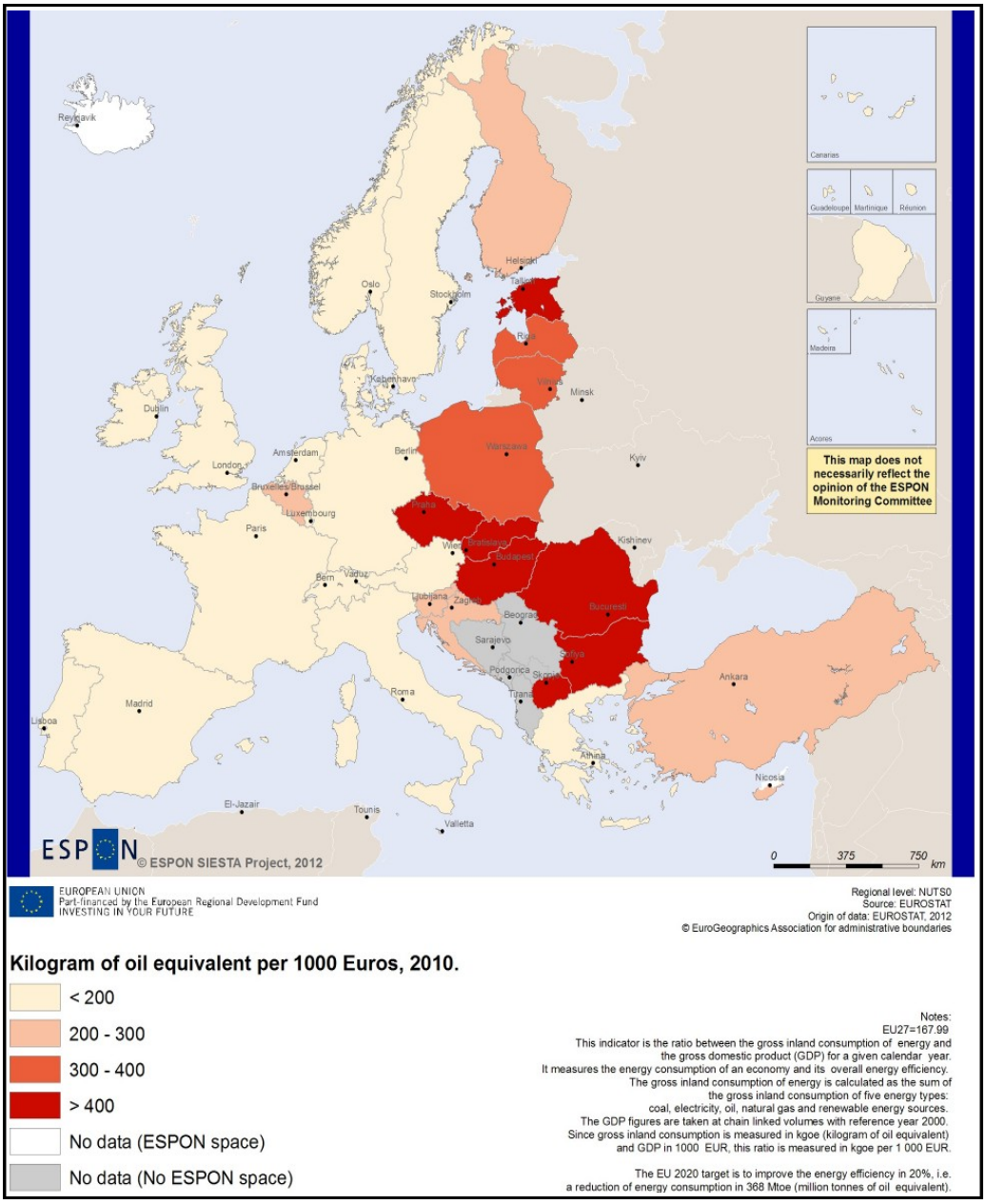

Fig. 1 - **Energy intensity of the national economy represented as gross inland consumption of energy divided by GDP, 2010**
Source: ESPON Siesta

Good performances are reported by several old Member States; above all, Denmark, the UK, Italy, Austria and Ireland, which show ratios close to the worldwide lowest energy intensity economy of Japan, and at the same time potential to reduce the gap from Japan itself. The energy sector could deliver important economic and environmental benefits with the creation of new jobs and reduction of energy dependency from imports of energy and raw materials. Greater energy security for the Union will be delivered if the target of 20% increase in energy efficiency is delivered.

Italy should place strong emphasis on this indicator due to the high imports of energy from other countries which make our country the first importer of energy from foreign sources of all European countries with a share of 14% of its total energy consumption (Terna 2013). A higher energy efficiency would therefore result in an economic benefit especially for the industrial sector and energy-intensive industries with the whole economy that would benefit from a steady and considerable reduction in costs and consequently in prices of end products. Moreover, as already highlighted within the two flagships “Resource-efficient Europe” and “An industrial policy for the globalisation era”, “meeting our energy goals could result in € 60 billion less in oil and gas imports by 2020” and renewable energy sources targets coupled with energy efficiency targets could result in over 1 million new jobs (EC 2010c: 13).

The other indicator whose discussion is of extreme importance in this section is the regional estimation of GHG emissions indicator. Such indicator was derived from different sources such as Eurostat “Greenhouse gas emission” and UNFCCC “National greenhouse gas inventory data for the period 1990-2009” and calculated by the SIESTA team by using the methodology provided by the ESPON Climate research project which allows the expression of regional GHG emissions from national level data using regional population and regional gross added value data from EUROSTAT. This indicator shows annual total aggregate GHG emissions excluding emissions/removals from land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) over the period 1990-2009. It does not include emissions from international aviation and international maritime transport.

Regional estimates of GHG emissions at NUTS2 and NUTS3 level are becoming increasingly significant to understand the contribution of cities to global climate change. Regions have different opportunities to embed adaptation and mitigation into their strategies, decreasing GHG emissions and adjusting their socio-economic systems to a low carbon economy. The analysis of the regional differences serves several purposes such as identifying the greatest sources of emissions within a particular region; providing a basis for developing specific tools, and contributing to trend analysis in the establishment of future goals and targets. Regional distribution of GHG emissions across Europe is quite heterogeneous (Espon Siesta Project, Atlas, 2013). Figure 2 and table 2 clearly show a division (equally spread in the new and in the old EU Member States) between metropolitan and urban areas such as Madrid, Barcelona, Milan, Rome, Paris, Berlin, and Bucharest and rural, low-density and depopulated areas. This demonstrates that GHG emissions have an important urban and regional dimension. The main metropolitan areas generate the highest GHG emissions. This is explained by the fact that one of the variables that is taken into account in the model for regionalisation of GHG emissions is the population. However, while literature states that livestock is substantial for GHG emissions, this has not been accounted for by the model. Logically, it would increase the GHG emissions contribution of some rural areas specialised in intensive primary industries. In any case, previous research has quantified that cities generate around 75% of all CO2 emissions, implying that challenges in this respect are territorially concentrated in these areas but may possibly affect other specific rural areas (Register 2006).

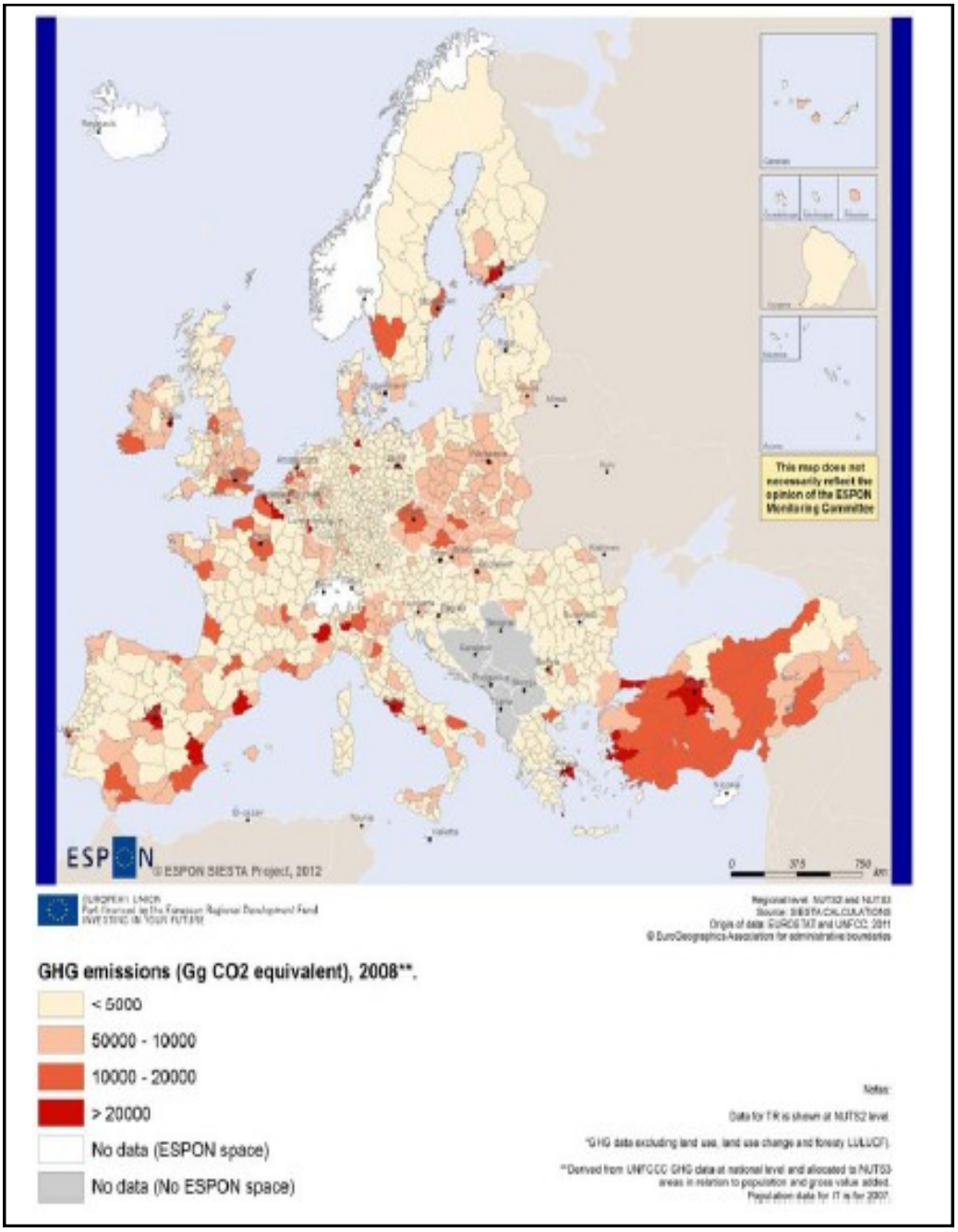

Fig. 2 - **Estimated regional GHG emissions excluding LULUCF, 2008**
Source: ESPON Siesta elaboration

Table 2

The 15 NUTS-3 Regions with the highest share of GHG emissions in 2008

Member States	Region	Regional estimates GHG emissions (exc. LULUCF)
TR100	Istanbul province	83261.52
ES300	Madrid	62774.90
ES511	Barcelona	51464.55
GR300	Αττική (Attiki)	50252.12
ITC45	Milan	43489.98
ITE43	Rome	41666.27
DE300	Berlin	37907.74
PL127	Miasto Warszawa	34778.67
FR101	Paris	33730.21
DE600	Hamburg	27507.19
TR510	Ankara	27192.39
CZ010	Hlavní město Praha	27085.04
RO321	Bucureşti	23806.07
ITF33	Naples	22969.91
FR105	Hauts-de-Seine	22651.20
Country Code: CZ *Czech Republic;* DE Germany; ES Spain; FR France; GR Greece; IT Italy; MT Malta; PL Poland; RO Romania; TR Turkey		

Source: Siesta Project elaboration

Data on Italian regions confirm this hypothesis (Fig. 3). The metropolitan areas of Milan, Rome and Naples are the three provinces with the highest levels of emissions of GHG. Other areas such as the industrialized North West and North East of the country with regions such as Piemonte and Veneto show high levels of GHG emissions. In the south of the country, apart from the area of Naples which is the third metropolitan area by population size, the provinces that show high levels of emissions coincide with the metropolitan areas of Bari, Palermo, Salerno and Catania. Among the 20 provinces that show the highest levels of emissions, only five are in the South. Table 3 shows how emissions are strongly related to population size and also to the industrial activity as in most of the northern regions.

The area of Taranto, where the ILVA industrial site that came to the fore in national as well as international news reports is located, does not show high levels of GHG emissions. However, recent data and reports on such area in 2012 and 2013 show high concentration of pollutants in the city of Taranto with consequently high risks for the public health (Kington 2012, Meichtry 2012).

In conclusion, because of the urban and regional dimension of GHG emissions, regional strategies for mitigating climate change are highly recommendable. Considering that metropolitan areas show high concentrations of GHG emissions, it is clear that particular urban strategies should be undertaken. All of this has direct implications for spatial and urban planning with the need to reduce sprawl and to favour a compact urban model. More efforts need to be undertaken by the majority of member states to increase energy efficiency and renewable energy development in order to decrease the amount of fuel burned in power plants, other industries, commercial buildings and households. The implementation of policy guidelines

on GHG reduction should take into account not only the state level, but also the local and regional scales. Changes at the local and regional spheres, for instance focusing on land use planning and management, actively contribute to the overarching aims.

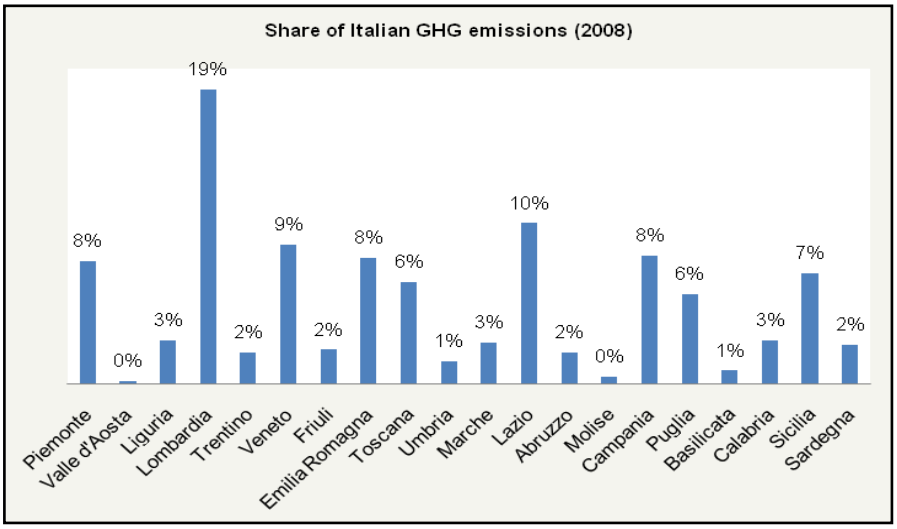

Fig. 3 - **Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Region estimates in Italy (2008 Year)**
Source: SIESTA Team elaboration

Table 3

GHG emissions by for Italian Provinces in 2008

Provinces	Emissions	Population	Rank by population
Milano	43,490	3,075,083	2
Roma	41,666	4,039,813	1
Napoli	22,970	3,055,339	3
Torino	21,718	2,254,720	4
Bari	12,432	1,246,297	5
Brescia	12,239	1,247,192	6
Bergamo	10,832	1,094,062	8
Bologna	10,135	990,681	11
Firenze	9,721	987,354	12
Palermo	9,488	1,243,638	9
Padova	8,959	927,848	13
Verona	8,834	907,352	15
Salerno	8,518	1,093,453	9
Vicenza	8,501	865,421	18
Varese	8,496	876,964	17
Treviso	8,486	881,245	16
Venezia	8,328	847,983	21
Genova	8,250	851,283	19
Catania	8,067	1,077,113	10
Modena	7,078	688.376	24

Source: SIESTA Team Elaboration

Regional trends in renewable energy production and consumption

Renewable energy is a crucial sector for a transition towards a low carbon economy. The use of renewable energy sources is a key element of an energy policy able to reduce dependence on fuel, emissions from carbon sources and to decouple energy costs from oil prices. Also, the renewable energy sector offers interesting perspectives for the development of new technologies and for new employment opportunities. As the “Energy 2020 Strategy” points out, it is estimated that achieving the EU target of 20% of final energy consumption by renewables by 2020 could provide about 410,000 additional jobs, the majority of which close to where the investments are made (EC 2010a: 9). Renewable energy is defined as any energy source that derives directly or indirectly from natural processes related to sunlight, heat stored in the earth or gravitational forces and that is constantly, naturally replenished (IEA 2011). Renewable energy includes hydroelectricity, biomass, wind, solar, tidal and geothermal energies.

The independent 2010 Renewable Energy Attractiveness Index indicates that US and China cities represent at the moment the best investment opportunities for renewable energy. New stimulus is needed; more than ever EU leadership is called upon to address these challenges (EC 2010a). At the national level the North Baltic Sea region is the geographical area that has the greatest development of renewable energy sources. The highest share of consumption from renewable sources was recorded in Norway with a 64.9%, though outside the EU-27, followed by Sweden with a 47.3%, Latvia 34.3% and Finland 30.3%. There are another three states above the EU2020S target in different parts of the continent (Austria, Portugal and Romania).

Table 4

Share of RES in final electricity consumption by region (2010 Year)

Region	Share of RES in final electricity consumption (%)	Region	Share of RES in final electricity consumption (%)
Piemonte	26.0	Umbria	37.4
Valle d'Aosta	251.4	Marche	10.9
Lombardia	19.1	Lazio	7.4
Liguria	5.4	Abruzzo	34.0
Bolzano	178.4	Molise	59.1
Trento	119.9	Campania	15.1
Veneto	15.8	Puglia	17.8
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	22.0	Basilicata	37.4
Emilia-Romagna	9.9	Calabria	53.9
Toscana	31.5	Sicilia	11.0
		Sardegna	15.9

Source: ISTAT (noi-italia.istat.it)

Italy in 2009 showed a share of 8.9% (ESPON Siesta, 2013). However, data gathered specifically for this paper from the Italian National Institute for Statistics (ISTAT) show performances at the regional level as of 2010 that do not vary considerably across regions. On average, excluding the autonomous region of Valle d'Aosta and the provinces of Bolzano and Trento, the southern regions' shares of RES in final electricity consumption are on the same level as the northern regions' (Table 4). However, things change considerably if renewable energy production by source is taken into consideration. Figure 4 below shows the level of RES

production by source for all of the regions. It is soon clear that the gap between the two areas is determined by investments in the technologies that are able to exploit natural sources for energy production.

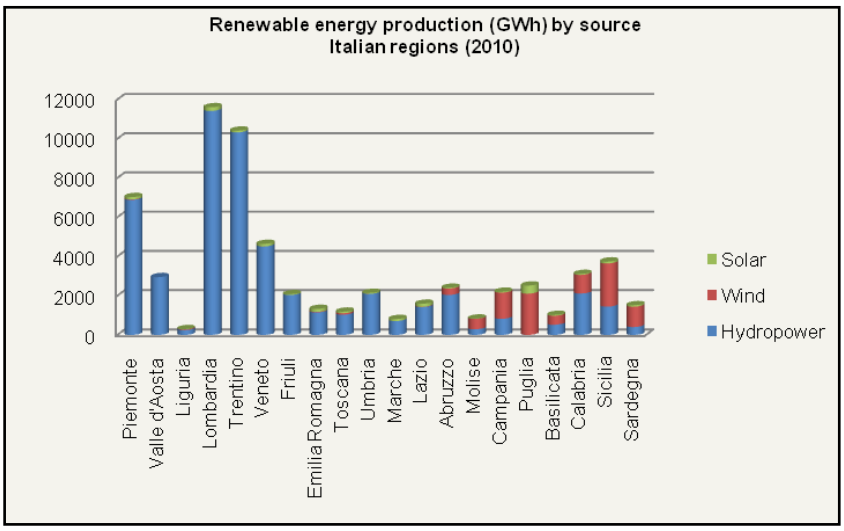

Fig. 4 - **Renewable energy production by source and region in Italy (2010 Year)**
Source: Gestore Servizi Energetici 2010 (http://www.gse.it/en/Pages/default.aspx)

Figures 5 and 6 show the potential for electricity production from wind power stations and photovoltaic panels. Wind power potential is derived from ESPON ReRisk final report "Production potential of wind power station among NUTS level 2 regions". This indicator identifies those regions in Europe which have the highest potential for producing electricity from on-shore wind power. As Figure 5 shows, wind power potential for northern as well as southern regions falls within the same class. However, surprisingly enough, despite of this, Figure 6 shows that electricity production from wind is much more developed in the South. The same cannot be said for solar PV panels production. Even though the potential for southern regions is obviously and visibly greater (Fig. 6), the production from this source does not differ considerably, leaving large unexploited potential for production from solar PV panels which could make southern regions more competitive, create new jobs and reduce the gap from the national target of 18.7% of total energy produced from RES.

EUROPE 2020 Strategy challenges and regional disparities

The discussion of specific indicators in the previous sections has showed how the Italian regions have different patterns in the production of energy from RES and how there is ample margin of improvement which would benefit both the economy and the environment. Efforts should be focused on reducing energy dependency form other countries, and this can be done by leveraging on two important sectors such as energy efficiency and production from RES. With regard to the latter, the southern regions appear to have invested less in such sector, especially in the solar technology which could contribute a great deal to increase energy production from renewable sources. However, this is not the only sector/indicator where southern regions are under-performing if compared to the regions of the north of Italy. If other indicators are taken into consideration, such as urban waste water treatment capacity (Map

2.24 of the SIESTA Atlas), and more essentially economic indicators such as regional unemployment rate (Map 4.5), regional population at risk of poverty (Map 4.16) and regional disposable income (Map 4.18), the situation does not change and the gap gets even wider.

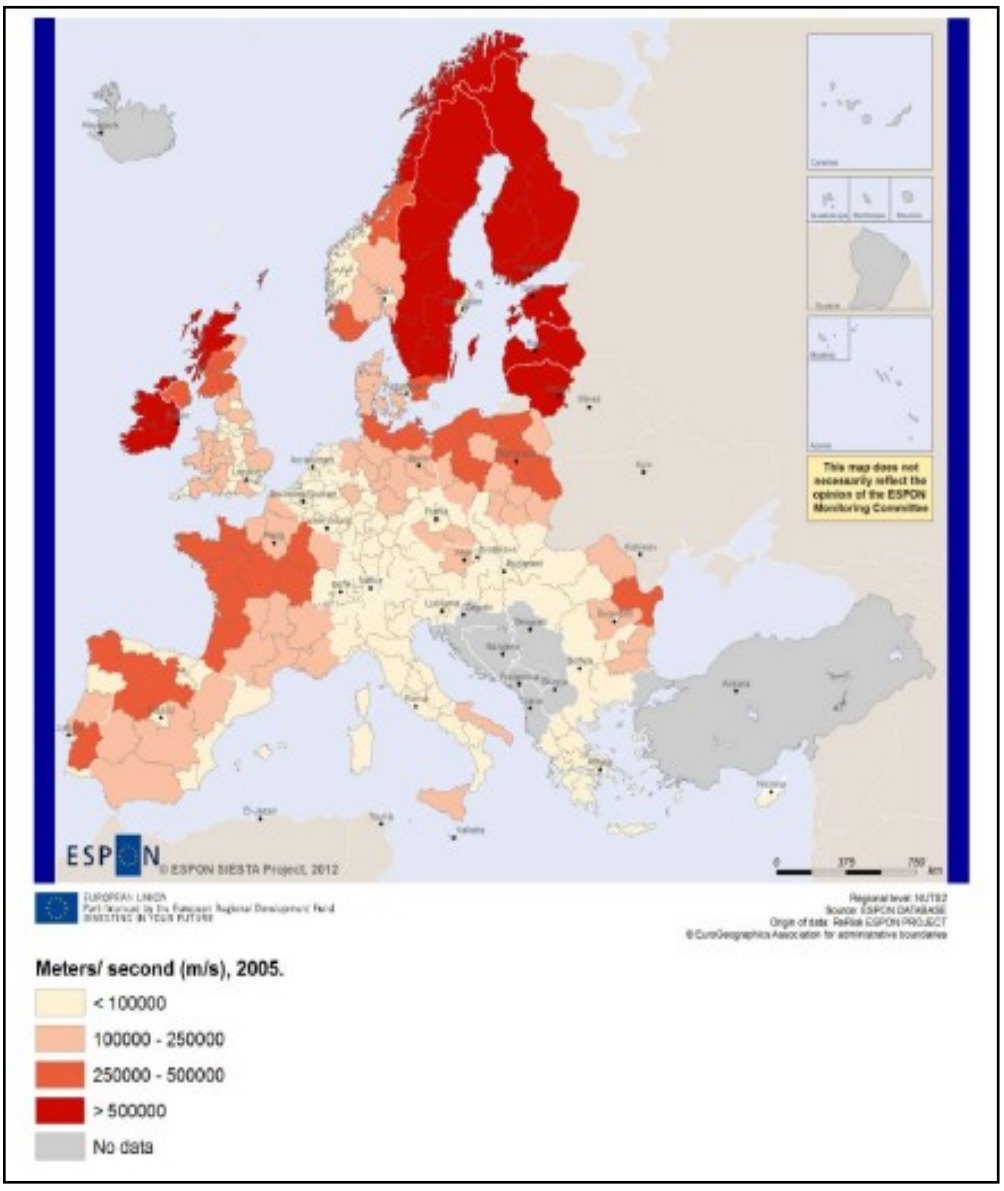

Fig. 5 - **Potential for electricity production from wind power stations represented in meters/second, 2005**
Source: ESPON Siesta elaboration

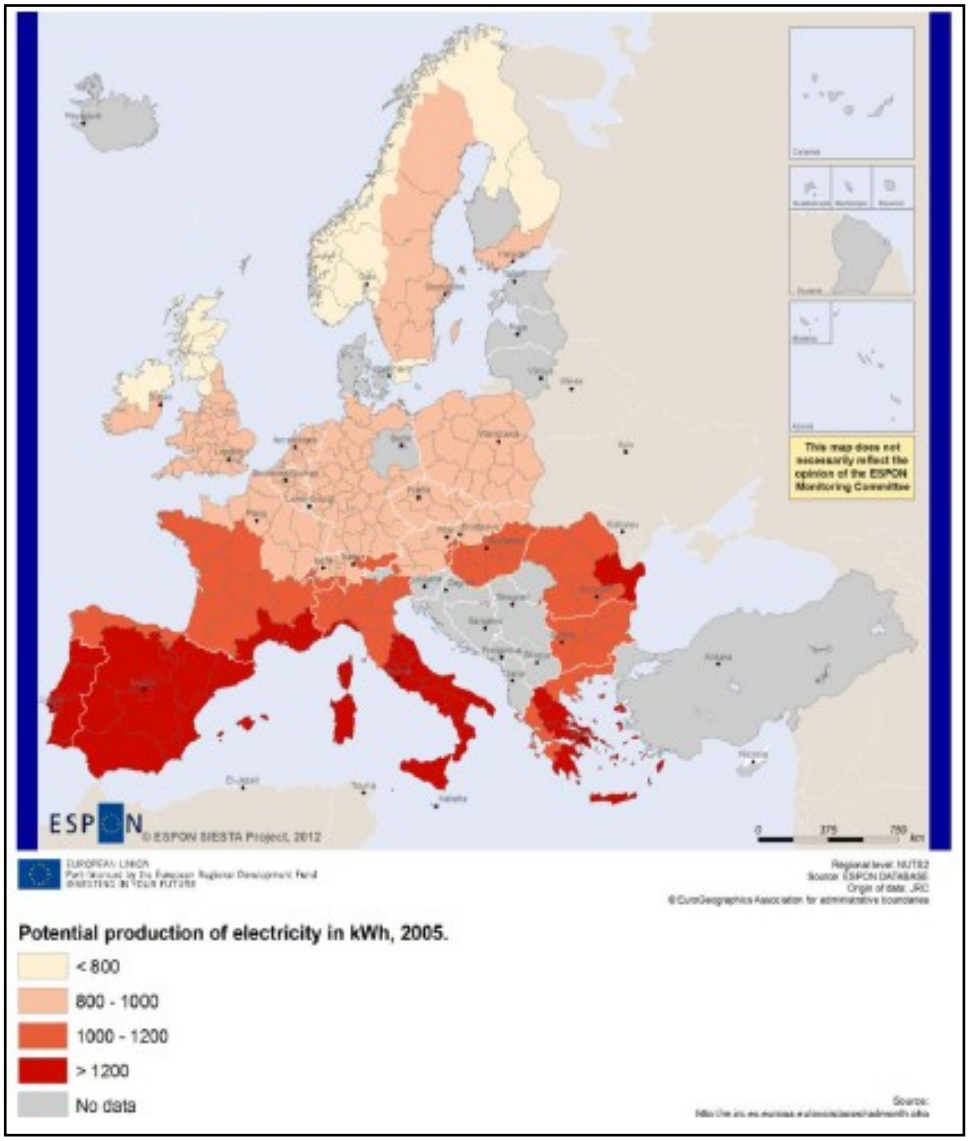

Fig.6 - **Potential for electricity production from photovoltaic panels represented in KWh, 200**5
Source: ESPON Siesta elaboration

The south regions are performing poorly compared to the northern regions and there is a great need to take action in order to reverse current trends. The aggregate SIESTA index developed within the framework of the SIESTA project takes into consideration the entire eight headline targets of the EU20202 Strategy and measures the distance of regions from the achievement of the target. This indicator shows marked disparities between the south and the north and in

general between all regions of Europe. A region would score 100 if it had reached all eight targets, while a region farthest away from all eight targets would score 0[1)]. The SIESTA project, with specific reference to the EU2020S and its policies and targets, has been able to highlight those sectors where most efforts should be placed in order to improve the current situation. The whole of Italy can benefit from targeted measures which, while creating job opportunities, could at the same time reduce greenhouse gas emission and increase energy efficiency. The main actions should therefore be aimed to achieve mixed targets in several sectors of the economy rather than focus only on job creation or on increasing production of renewable energy sources.

Figure 7 (Maps 5.1 of the SIESTA Atlas) shows that, all across Europe, all top positions in the achievement of the regional EU2020S aggregate index for 2009-2010 are represented by Scandinavian regions, plus Southern Germany, several French regions and South England (North of London and Hampshire). The divide for Italy is clearly visible and highlights disparities between the south and the north of the country. Such disparities and imbalances derive especially from indicators such as people at risk of poverty, early school leavers and unemployment rate. Figure 7 clearly shows that the worst performing regions are all the southern regions which have an index lower than 50. All other regions score better and fall within the two classes 50 – 60 or 60 – 70, with the best performing regions equally distributed between Middle Italy and Northern Italy. In general, this Figure shows a general gap between Italy and the most developed regions of Scandinavia, Britain, France and Germany, meaning that there is margin of improvement. Designing specific policies that will contribute to meeting the EU2020S targets would certainly determine a strong improvement in the performances of the Italian regions.

Conclusions and policy recommendations

This paper, by building upon the results and outcomes of the SIESTA Project, has focused on the trajectories and trends of Italy and especially of the Italian regions with regard to fundamental indicators for climate change and sustainability-related performances such as energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and regional greenhouse gas emissions. The results highlight that there is great potential for the improvement of regional performances even in sectors such as energy efficiency of the economy where current Italian's performances are among the top European States. Whereas, as far as greenhouse gas emissions and energy production from RES are concerned performances can be greatly improved. The former, by acting and taking action mostly at local and regional level since emissions appear to be extremely related to metropolitan areas with the largest population. Acting on household behaviours, public transport improvements in large cities since, transport accounts for about one quarter of all EU GHG, and new freight transport policies, and new and more efficient buildings could deliver greater improvements than expected, not only relatively to cutting emissions but also with regard to energy efficiency. Green economy and renewable energy can stimulate job creation, new technologies and increased trade. Moreover, as seen, there is also a great potential for solar PV enhancement especially for the southern regions. Investment in this sectors as well as measures to constantly increase energy efficiency have the potential to reduce energy dependency of Italy resulting in lower costs of end products which coupled with potentially cheaper freight transport would bear extremely positive results.

1) However, it should be kept in mind that data are available only at the national level for the three indicators that particularly interest us in this paper (20/20/20 Targets), and that for another one (people at risk of poverty or social exclusion) the scale at which data are available changes depending on the country.

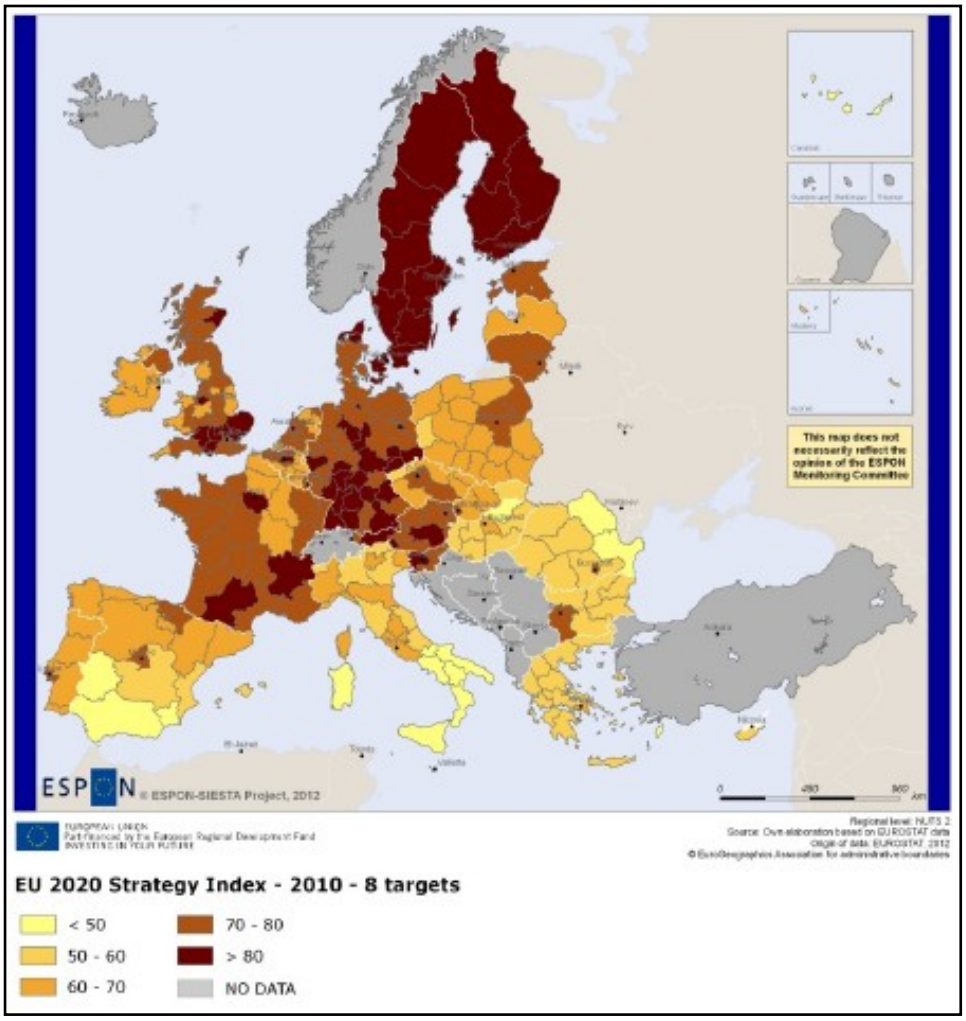

Fig. 7 - **Siesta Aggregate Index**
Source: ESPON Siesta elaboration

However, in order to determine a shift towards a greener and more sustainable economy, there is also the necessity to face the disparities and imbalances between the North and the South of the country, which generally concern several sectors from energy to education, ICT, waste and essentially economic indicators such as disposable income, unemployment rate and people at risk of poverty. Like other European countries, Italy is suffering a complex period of financial crisis that does not encourage investments on renewables and energy efficiency. Apart from this, Italy has a long (negative) tradition as Member State with relatively low absorption rate in structural funds. Italy needs to implement new policies in order to avoid past mistakes.

Is Italy ready to take advantage of the upcoming 2014-2020 EU structural funds as well as the Europe 2020 Strategy? Our point of view is that Italy should coordinate better the governance

between the State and Regions and raise awareness of the importance of all opportunities derived by EU2020S. The latter, as seen in this paper, could be a great strategy to improve territorial cohesion and regional disparities in smart, inclusive and sustainable growth, but without a regional policy rationale that rests on the application of industrial policy as a fulcrum for integrating the different components of the domain governance of Europe 2020, its objectives may not be realised (Budd 2013). The achievement of a (real) sustainable growth in Italy requires dynamic regional authorities, investments on R&D, new policies based on strong links between development, production and sustainable consumption, timely and applicable solutions. All these components may be better integrated in developing an Italy's key strategy for the rest of the decade.

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BEYOND THE FRINGE: THE ROLE OF RECREATION IN MULTI-FUNCTIONAL URBAN FRINGE LANDSCAPES

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Abstract: This paper reviews some of the academic literature and policy documents that relate to and promote the need for urban design and the re-invigoration of the processes and practices of 'masterplanning'. Specifically, this paper concerns the implications for recreation in areas that have been conceptualised in a number of ways including 'urban fringe' and 'fringe-belt' and the ways in which these areas are being re-developed as multi-functional spaces in the planning process. The paper pays particular attention to the proposed development of the 'North Plymouth Community Park' examining the claims made for the sustainable characteristics of the development and questioning the absence of the cultural aspects of recreation.

Key Words: *recreation, planning, fringe-belt, urban.*

Introduction

There are areas of towns and cities that have been relatively neglected by planning processes and by academic study. The nomenclature of these areas is a source of contestation with the terms 'fringe-belt' (Conzen 1960, Whitehand and Morton 2006), 'urban fringe' (Gallent et al. 2004) and 'edgelands' (Shoard 2002, 2003) being employed to describe and allow for the conceptualisation of particular sorts of landscape that share features. Conzen et al. (2013) review this literature and state that "…(r)esearch on fringe belts remained of largely academic interest until the late 1990s, at which time the connection between the research idea and the practice of planning began to receive increasing attention" (Conzen et al. 2013: 36). The academic and policy reasons behind these differences in terminology are explored in the paper later but Conzen et al. (2013: 36) succinctly capture the reason for engaging in this process of theorising: "(t)he practical significance of the fringe-belt idea lies in its potential to clarify and reinforce the rational and cultural basis for understanding the urban landscape as the meaningful outcome of general and place-specific historico-geographical development" (Conzen et al. 2013: 36). This paper uses the 'fringe-belt' idea to understand and examine the specific geographic developments in the city of Plymouth in the United Kingdom as a case study and argues that the role of recreation requires greater attention in the academic and planning literature.

When Natural England produced its review of the work of the Countryside in and Around Cities (CIAT) initiative in 2006 the term Green Infrastructure (GI) was promoted. One of the significant features of Green Infrastructure is the scope for recreation, it is claimed. This paper explores the characteristic features of this infrastructure as well as the reasons why local government has been obliged both to audit this infrastructure and to play an active role in its development. Before doing this, it is necessary to outline some of the key features of the recent transformation of urban landscapes generally and the claims made for the need for the planning and design of areas that have, to some extent, not been subjected to planning processes in the past.

According to Madanipour (2006) there has been a growing appreciation from central government in Britain that urban design deals, not just with appearances, but with the organization of urban space and the processes that take place within those spaces. Thus, design addresses "the way places work as well as how they look" (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2005: 23, quoted in Madanipour 2006: 178). This growing appreciation has led to new approaches in urban design and planning that are starting to transform spaces that were previously neglected by urban planning, approaches that may lead to the formalisation of spaces and have particular consequences for recreation.

The Transformation of Urban Landscape and Green Spaces

To understand the emerging significance of the 'fringe-belt' or 'urban fringe' in the early 21st century it is important to recognise some of the major features of the transformation of cities generally. The balance of the population at a global level has shifted towards cities as the majority of the world's population now live in them and, although the population of Britain is relatively stable, there has been a shift towards urban living alongside a general ageing of the population. Conzen et al. (2013: 36) state that "(u)rban landscapes are changing at an unprecedented pace in most parts of the world" and argue the case for more case studies in urban morphology to enhance understanding of these dynamic landscapes. The response of local governments to the economic and social changes of the cities that they represent has taken place in a period of general withdrawal of direct state involvement. During a period of neo-liberalism in the 1980s and 1990s, the response of local governments in Britain generally to the structural changes to the economic base of Britain was muted, one manifestation of which was the lack of planning by those whose roles include the regulation of cities:

> "Planning and design at the urban scale seemed to be entirely within the remit of the government. However, as the state started to withdraw from many of its activities, retreating into a regulatory role, urban development became mainly a task for the private sector" (Madanipour 2006: 177).

Many urban areas on the fringe of cities were developed in this period of private sector led development, development that was often piecemeal. For the purposes of this paper, the features that are of interest are that some urban areas feature a significant amount of green space that may be utilised for recreation and, further, that some areas may have suffered as a result of not being designed for human residence. However, for Whitehand and Morton (2006: 2047), "...(t)he imprint of the late 19th and early 20th centuries on the character of the urban fringe remains strong, many urban fringes are being subjected to increased pressure for change, including redevelopment for housing".

Defining Urban Fringes

Natural England (2007) estimates that the urban fringe around towns and cities accounts for more than 20% of the land area of England. The Countryside In and Around Towns programme (CIAT), adopted by Natural England, suggests the need for a strategic approach to maximise the best uses of its resources, and to contribute towards sustainable development.

For Gant et al. (2011: 266), the notion of the rural/urban fringe first appears in the 1930s when geographers and planners in the United Kingdom voiced concerns about the loss of productive agricultural land to urban growth and led to forms of statutory intervention in land

use planning to restrict ribbon development and the first attempts to create green belts around cities in the 1930s, initially (Gant et al. 2011: 266). They go on to mark Conzen's definition from 1960 of the fringe-belt as a significant intervention in the emergence of morphological analysis:

> "…originating from the temporarily stationary but slowly advancing edge of a town and composed of a characteristic mixture of land use units initially seeking a peripheral location' (Conzen 1960: 125, quoted by Gant et al. 2011: 266).

The urban fringe or fringe belt is "planning's last frontier" according to Griffiths (1994: 14, quoted in Gallent et al. 2004) arguing that areas abutting towns and cities have been largely neglected by land-use planning and by those agencies, public and private, with direct or indirect planning responsibilities. These fringe areas have, nevertheless, developed with some shared features including un-neighbourly functions such as sewage farms, reclamation sites, recycling centres and energy sub-stations as well as business parks, leisure 'parks' (Evans and Foord 2008) and golf courses. For Shoard (2002: 117), this is the unique landscape of the edgelands:

> "...often vast in area, though hardly noticed, it is characterized by rubbish tips and warehouses, superstores and derelict industrial plant, office parks and travellers' encampments, golf courses, allotments and fragmented, frequently scruffy, farmland. All these heterogeneous elements are arranged in an unruly and often apparently chaotic fashion against a background of unkempt wasteland frequently swathed in riotous growths of colourful plants, both native and exotic."

Such areas are, therefore, multi-functional in contrast to the mono-industrial character of the rural countryside that developed following the Second World War. This, for Shoard (2002) is down to the rural planning in Britain which has seen a move away from the multi-use of space to single use. Lowenthal and Prince (1965: 185) recognised, some time ago, that the urban fringe exists without the sense of orderliness and intimacy that the English favour as their rural idyll, areas that are "...tamed and inhabited, warm, comfortable, humanized".

Gant et al. (2011) argue that even the efforts by authorities to create green belts has not led to the expected or intended outcome, "…(d)espite the attempt to preserve rurality and create a green 'lung' for the city… the creation of Green Belts has neither created an entirely satisfactory edge to the city nor is it really correct to label this edge as green" (Gant et al. 2011: 267) as their case study of Shepperton illustrates. There is, however, something noteworthy in the guidelines produced by the Department of Communities and Local Government in 1995 when outlining the objectives of green belts. This lies in the emphasis on the role of green belt areas in providing opportunities for outdoor recreation and sport.

The urban fringe emerged during a hiatus in the growth of built-up areas and became embedded as towns and cities assumed their growth around them. Urban fringes are significant in the understanding of urban development not least because they have distinct physical characters even though these areas were largely ignored by planning processes. However, since the turn of the last century in particular, these urban fringe areas have become of increasing significance to a range of different groups. Personal responses have been recorded by both psychogeographers and poets (Farley and Roberts 2011) making claims for

the beauty of derelict and neglected spaces.

But it is in the economic development of urban fringes that the causes of transformation may be located. The growing commercialisation of public services including higher education, the health service and recycling has changed the value of the urban fringe as well as the increasing pressure from central government for an increase in the housing stock. The UK government's Communities Plan revolves around the development of hundreds of thousands of new homes, both inside cities and outside them in new settlements and towns.

Whitehand and Morton (2006) also note the increasing concern for the protection of sites of ecological significance as canals, former railway lines (now re-invented as linear parks), golf courses and small areas of woodland. Such areas may be re-assessed for their contribution to the requirement of sustainable forms of development.

Green Infrastructure and Green space strategies

Green infrastructure is a term that has emerged to capture a range of different types of spaces but they are located in largely urban areas and embrace spaces traditionally managed or monitored by local authorities such a cemeteries, parks and recreational areas as well as informal green spaces often found on the urban fringe. The Countryside Agency and Groundwork (2005: 18) have outlined the social functions of such spaces: "…(t)he countryside in and around towns forms a vital part of sustainable towns and cities. It inspires urban living that is connected to nature, to the countryside and reflects responsibilities to the wider environment".

They list a series of policy drivers including climate change, housing, renewable energy, housing, transport, health and education but not recreation explicitly, although recreation may be inferred from the priority given to health. The multifunctionality of green infrastructure is highlighted in the following list of attributes (The Countryside Agency and Groundwork 2005):

- A gateway to the town.
- A health centre.
- A classroom.
- A recycling and renewable energy centre.
- A productive landscape.
- A cultural legacy.
- A place for sustainable living.
- An engine for regeneration.
- A nature reserve.

This list does not prioritise recreation but it may be inferred from the term "health centre":

> "As the programme has developed, so too has the concept and credibility of Green Infrastructure (GI). GI describes the processes by which new and existing green spaces and green networks are properly planned, designed and integrated into town and country planning in a strategic fashion. Delivery of multifunctionality and GI have frequently overlapped and provided mutually beneficial opportunities for promoting their related principles." (The Countryside Agency and Groundwork 2005).

Strategies for green infrastructure have emerged in a number of regions frequently informed by GIS modelling exercises to provide the data and evidence of the multifunctionality of spaces. According to the CIAT document, this work is challenging in terms of the assessment of the data that are generated.

The role of GIS modelling is evident in the development of the Greenspace strategy for Plymouth as it embraces the use and application of GIS data. The claim is that such data inform an analysis of access to green space as well as educational opportunities and other indicators of a pleasant living environment. The analysis becomes part of the creation of Local Development Frameworks.

The use of this data, in the example of the GreenSpace Strategy for Plymouth, leads to a rationalisation of the use of space based on a series of assumptions about the health and social benefits of green spaces but also on the basis that such spaces will contribute to 'global cooling' and other claims about sustainable forms of living. And, crucially, the establishment of protected areas of green space inhibits the use of the land for other purposes as Jenkins and Pigram (2006) have noted: "Despite the attraction of the concept, experience in major world cities suggests that the protection of a permanent zone of Greenspace is difficult in the face of compelling pressures to maximise economic use of valuable land (2006: 198)."

Plymouth's Green Space Strategy

The Green Space Strategy for Plymouth (Plymouth City Council 2009) brings together has a number of policy drivers including sustainability and health but the significance of recreation is aired in the foreword:

> "Plymouth's green spaces are places where people can relax, enjoy nature, take children to play or take part in sport or recreation. They are essential for the health and well-being of the City. However, there is more that can be done to improve the quality of Plymouth's green spaces so that more people can visit and enjoy them." (Plymouth City Council 2009: foreword)

The strategy sets out proposals to ensure that green spaces become more accessible and safe, proposals based, it is claimed, on the basis of detailed research into the existing quality of green spaces combined with the results about the ways in which local people view such spaces. One underlying assumption is that the natural environment provides the function of escape from the stresses of everyday (urban) life.

The assessment of the quantity and quality of green space in Plymouth led to the planning prescription that there should be 5.09 hectares of green space per 1,000 of population and that this prescription is made up of a breakdown of green space into four categories: informal Green Space; parks and gardens; local nature reserves and natural green spaces. This means that as the population of the city grows so does the need to provide green space. The research – in the form of consultation exercises and questionnaires – into the perceptions and uses of green spaces found that 45% of people take less than 5 minutes to reach their preferred green space, 26% take between 5 and 10 minutes and 18% take up to 15 minutes (Plymouth City Council 2009). Significantly, the majority of people will walk up to five minutes to access a green space but fewer will walk if a green space is more than a five minute walk away. This led to a key aim of the strategy which is to ensure that people do not have to walk more than 400 m to their nearest green space and not more than 600 m to

their nearest play space. The prescriptions in the green space strategy recognise the established behaviours of the residents of the city alongside the existing quantity and quality of the spaces and are encoded in the statutory approaches to land use in the form of local development frameworks. The statutory element of the local development frameworks produces a comparison to the discretionary character of other forms local authority provision of recreation. The strategy becomes an example of the sort of planning referred to by Veal as 'fixed standard' approach' (2010: 162) in which a prescribed level of provision is offered typically against the level of population – not unlike the approach of 'Fields in Trust' (formerly the National Playing Fields Association) alongside a catchment approach based upon the distances people have to travel to gain access to a facility. The basis of this sort of planning is the principle of equity.

In this strategy, prescriptions are made on the modernist principle that the behaviour of people may be modified, in this case by increasing access to services. The need to allow people to walk to the green spaces will have a significant impact on the urban fringe of Plymouth as the strategy is implemented, in particular with the planning and rationalisation of a significant area to the north of the city. The north of the city is covered by the Derriford and Seaton Area Action Plan which includes the development of a major new accessible green space on what is currently inaccessible farmland. This farmland exists within the urban fringe but also stretches down a valley meaning that a number of residential areas are close by. Seventy hectares of new accessible green space are to link with the existing Local Nature Reserves and be within walking distance of a significant number of local people currently not catered for. In Figure 1, the Green Space Strategy Diagram, the position of Plymouth is shown with the

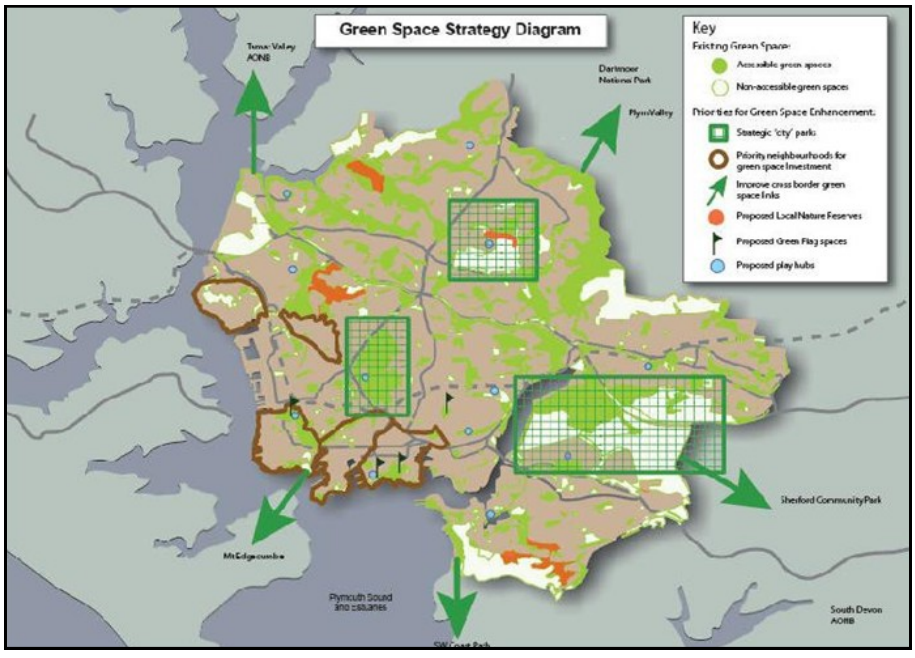

Fig. 1 - **The Green Space Strategy Diagram**

national park of Dartmoor to the north of the city and the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the west. The waterfront area adjacent to Plymouth Sound was, historically, the area to urbanise first with development to the north of the city fairly piecemeal until after World War Two. The proposed North Plymouth Community Park is represented in the upper gridded square.

In Figure 2, the proposed park is labelled as 'North Plymouth Community Park' although the name may change to 'Derriford Community Park'. This figure highlights the manner in which the park abuts several residential areas with the intention that a number of access points allow residents to gain access within the short time that is habitual according to the data. Informal recreation is an intended outcome of provision but the planning allows for the provision of food production in the form of community farms, areas designed to enhance biodiversity and opportunities for education either informally with the farms or more formally if outdoor classrooms can be developed. For this paper, one important feature is that these areas are designed to be multifunctional and constitute a move away from the mono-functionality of farms and some existing formal green spaces.

Brandt (2003) argues that landscapes perform five basic functions and have an inherent capacity to be multi-functional. Their breakdown of the five functions highlight recreation either explicitly or implicitly: ecological functionality, meaning that landscape is an area for living for both human and non-human life; economic functionality, meaning areas for production; sociocultural functionality, or areas for recreation and identification; historical functionality, or areas which offer a sense of sociocultural continuity; and aesthetic functionality, with landscapes providing areas for experiences. The community park referred to in Figure 2 has the capacity to perform the ecological, sociocultural and aesthetic functionalities from Brandt's formulation and to offer them on the basis of equity. It is also possible that such provision may relieve the pressure of use of other areas including the nearby Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Dartmoor National Park.

Conclusion

This paper takes as its starting point the renewal of interest in town planning given the resurgence of urban design as identified by Madanipour (2006). The paper develops an analysis of the ways in which recreation is 'carried along' in the process of the establishment of green space strategies using Plymouth in England as a case study. There are features in this case study that are of more general interest and application to other areas. A key feature is the use of modernist principles to specify the availability of green space in terms of the distances that people must walk in order to gain access. This amounts to a significant intervention by the local government in terms of recreational planning and makes a behavioural assumption that residents will change their lifestyles and habits if the supply of green spaces is improved. Although recreation is not the principal focus of green space strategies, the significance for recreation should not be diminished. Veal (2010) notes that, "in general, the statutory land-use planning system, because of its statutory basis, remains the most powerful form of planning and one of the most effective means of securing and implementing policies" (Veal 2010: 179). Section Nine of the National Policy Planning Framework in the United Kingdom (2012) specifies that local government must protect 'Green Belts' within their jurisdiction and to provide for outdoor sport and recreation but there is no equivalent obligation for the recreational uses of green space. The recreational use of green space is not specified in the framework. Local government has the discretion to develop green space.

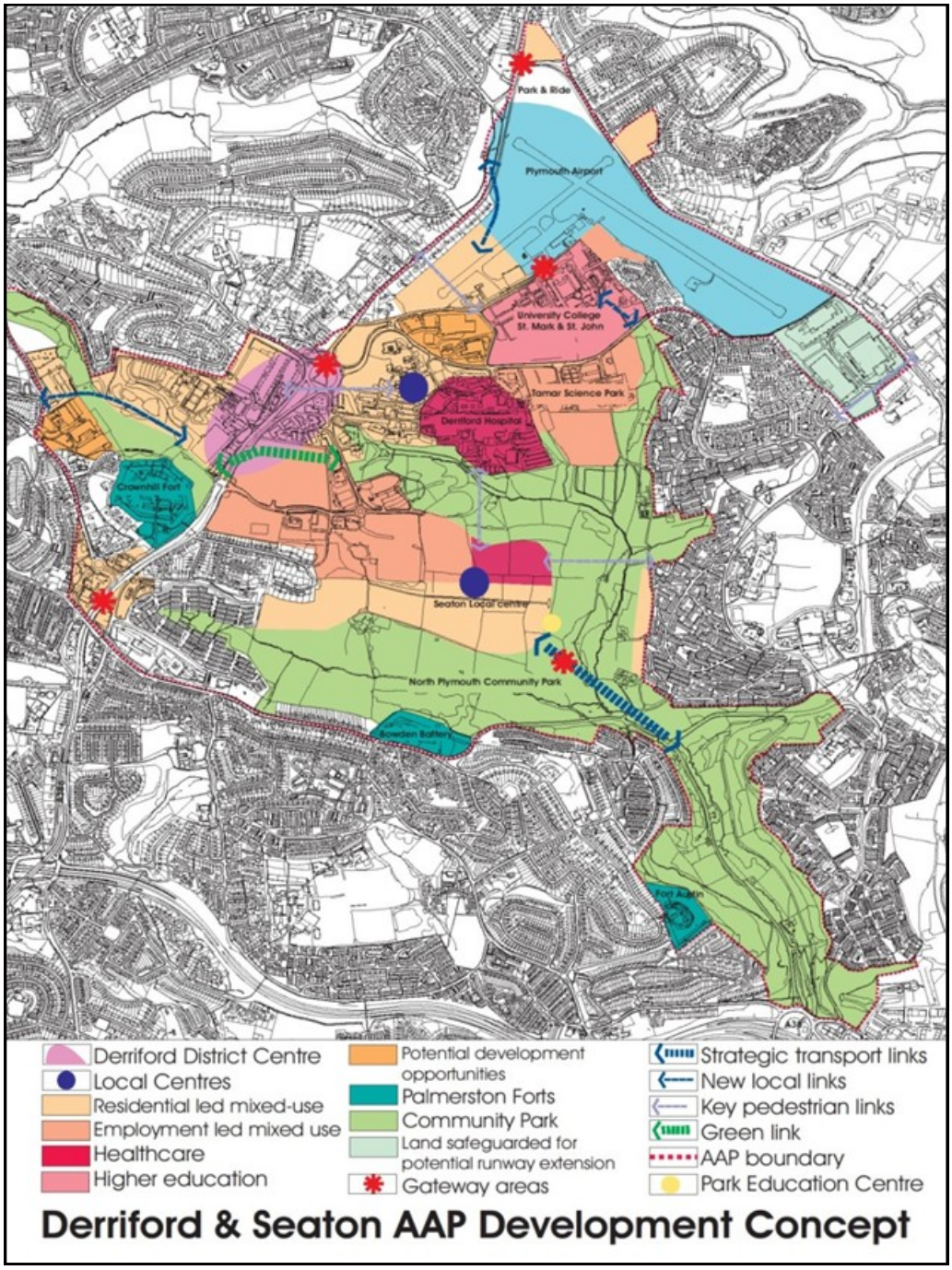

Fig. 2 - **Derriford and Seaton Area Action Plan**

The Plymouth case study is illustrative of the opportunity that local government may make in relation to their commitments for the provision of outdoor recreation alongside the need to enhance landscapes and to improve derelict land. There is a particular relevance for the agencies of local government, many of which are in the process of changing their commitments to discretionary services and adapting to diminishing budgets. If proposals for the use of green space can survive the scrutiny of central government in Britain then these areas may become valuable resources for recreation as well as being protected from the sorts of development activity common to the urban fringe such as noxious industries, waste disposal and business parks. The likes of Farley and Roberts (2011) and Meades (2010) might bemoan the formalization of these informal spaces with their derelict beauty, accidental collisions of function and untidiness but they may, at least, improve as places to live.

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REGIONAL DIFFERENCES AND REGIONAL COHESION: CASE STUDY OF BULGARIA

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Abstract: The aim of this research is to study regional differences and regional cohesion in Bulgaria in accordance with "Europe 2020" Strategy. On the basis of analyses and comparisons of selected individual indicators, the existing significant differences in the regional development of the 6 NUTS 2 regions in the country are shown. The paper presents also the goals of regional cohesion according to the National Regional Development Strategy 2012-2022, prepared in order to integrate the goals of "Europe 2020" Strategy and the National Development Programme Bulgaria 2020.

Key Words: *regional differences, regional cohesion, Bulgaria, "Europe 2020" Strategy.*

Introduction

The research of regional development, economic growth and regional disparities is very important for defining better the objectives of regional policy. In the last two decades there are "theoretical transformations" in the field of "economic growth and development", "both at the national and subnational level" (Barca et al. 2012). "First came the endogenous growth revolution (Romer 1986, Lucas 1988), the new economic geography (Krugman 1991, 1995, Fujita et al. 1999) followed, and the institutional turn in economics (Rodrik et al. 2004, Acemoglu and Johnson 2006a, 2006b)", after that "a series of highly influential reports about regional development policy intervention by the World Bank (2009), the European Commission (Barca 2009), the OECD (2009a, 2009b), and the Corporaci´on Andina de Fomento (CAF 2010)" (Barca et al. 2012: 135). According to Oort and Bosma (2013), "place-neutral strategies rely on the agglomerative forces of the largest cities and metropolitan regions to attract talent and growth potential. Place-based development strategists (Barca and McCann 2010) claim that the polycentric nature of a set of smaller- and medium-sized cities in Europe, each with their own peculiar characteristics and specializing in the activities to which they are best suited, creates fruitful urban variety, which enhances optimal economic development […] A related place-based regional policy dimension relevant for the European Union concerns objective-1 regions that have been supported in cohesion policy" (p. 215).

Many factors may affect the regional development and growth, "such as physical, technological, and social capital, cultural diversity, industrial and geographical characteristics" (Marrocu and Paci 2013) – natural conditions and resources, economic, political factors, investments, innovations, capital, human capital, knowledge, globalization. Regions benefit "from higher human capital endowments and technological capacities, as well as from geographical factors such as proximity to markets or a location in the core. In the second of these explanations, new economic geography signals the presence of knowledge spillovers, common labour skills or forward/backward linkages as determinants of location patterns and, hence, specialization" (Mora and Moreno 2010: 312). The role of the cities in the development process is significant (Fafchamps 2012), especially in the case of the countries with transforming economies and also involving processes of transformation (Mync and

Komornicki 2000), the inheritance from the planning economy development, the European integration, etc.: "Since the beginning of the EU transition process, CEECs have continually received an increasing amount of foreign direct investment in the form of financial capital, fixed assets, knowledge (both codified and tacit) and technology. These have played an active and dynamic role in enhancing the industrial restructuring process and driving the (re)integration of CEECs into the world economy" (Pusterla and Resmini 2007: 636).

"The new theoretical insights from NEG are in line with the empirical observation that inter-regional disparities in Europe, especially within countries, have grown since the 1980s. The evidence reviewed in Montfort (2009) leads to the conclusion that in the last 10–15 years, disparities have diminished *among* countries and increased *within* countries" (Oort and Bosma 2013: 216). The territorial inequalities in Bulgaria also increased in the last two decades. The deepening of regional disparities is not typical only for Bulgaria; a similar trend is visible in surveys about other countries with transforming economies, „despite governments' efforts to reduce them"[1)](Szlachta 1995, Angelov et al. 2003, Boyadjiev 2005, Wecławowicz 2005, Enyedi 2005, Rydz 2006, Tarkowski 2008, Ianoş 2000, Kallioras and Petrakos 2010, Ilieva 2010, 2011, 2012, Ianoş et al. 2013). The „development with increasing and decreasing territorial imbalances confirms the spa-tial theories according to which any development should be based on the existence of territorial gaps (Hirschman 1958). These gaps cause disruptions of symmetry during the regional development process, and the final result is a spiral evolution of the regions, similar to the cycle dynamics of a strongly anthropo-genic territorial system (Ianoş et al. 2011)" (Ianoş et al. 2013: 3).

Bulgaria is one of the states from the sixth EU enlargement (2007). It constitutes 2.57% of the EU28 area and 1.44% of its population. The achieved level of socio-economic development of the country is a result of the course of transformation processes during the last two decades, and of the impact of many different economic, political, demographic etc. factors. Bulgaria produced 0.3% from the total GDP of EU (2011). GDP per capita in PPS was 46% from the EU 27 average (2011). The regional development activity and regional policy in Bulgaria are harmonized with the EU regional policy in the pre-accession period. In the end of the 1990s, six planning regions were established in Bulgaria as territorial framework and organizational structure for the future sustainable and balanced regional development in compliance with the process of integration of Bulgaria into the EU and for carrying out relevant regional policy. On the territory of EU, as it is underlined in the European Community Treaty, "in order to promote its overall harmonious development, the Community shall develop and pursue its actions leading to the strengthening of its economic and social cohesion. In particular, the Community shall aim at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the less favoured regions or islands, including rural areas" (Article 158, Consolidated version, 2006).

After a period of dynamic development of the Bulgarian economy (2005-2008), the world economic crisis has had negative impact and consequences in Bulgaria, as well as in other European states. In the process of overcoming those consequences, several national documents have been prepared, interrelated to the "Europe 2020" Strategy. These documents emphasize also on regional differences and possible ways and actions for cohesion on the following three levels – Bulgaria and EU, regional and intraregional level in next two decades. "EU cohesion policy is often credited with improving cooperation and coordination in the delivery of the regional development policy through the application of multi-level governance enshrined in the partnership principle. By imposing a close partnership among a variety of actors, cohesion policy has the capacity to alter domestic relations between the centre and the

1) Ianoş et al. 2013.

periphery, and to create a broader scope for regional and bottom-up involvement in economic development policy. However, a lack of decentralization tradition and collaborative policy-making, as well as a limited capacity of sub-national actors (in the Central and Eastern European countries – M.I.), can result in uneven outcomes of the application of the partnership principle across countries and regions" (Dąbrowski 2013: 1).

Material and Methods

In this study of regional differences and regional cohesion in Bulgaria, the 6 NUTS 2 regions, created in compliance with the new Regional Development Act (2008) for the needs of planning, programming, management, resource supply and regional development monitoring and assessment, have been used as basic territorial units. The NUTS 2 regions are considered to be "the territorial basis for the implementation of the state policy in the field of regional development" (Zakon 2008). The Regional Development Act (2008) changed the territorial scope and boundaries of five of the regions[2)] in a way that they are relatively equal in size, population and economic power. Only the South-West region remained unchanged. Each region now includes four (North-East and South-East region) or five NUTS 3 units (the other four regions) (Fig. 1).

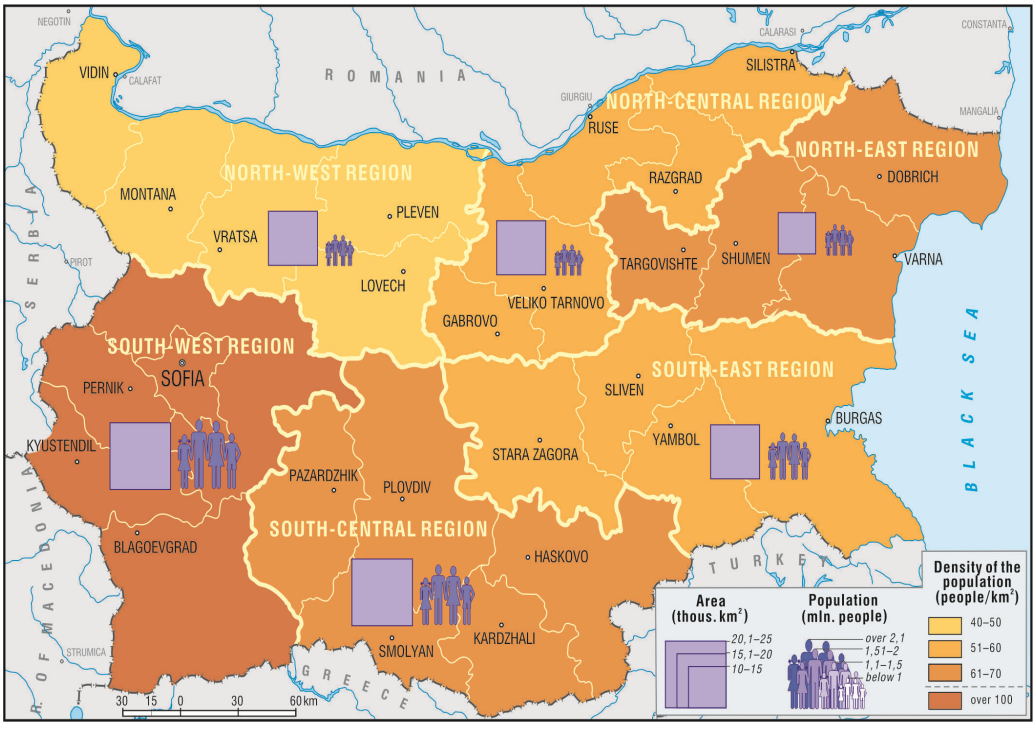

Fig. 1 - NUTS **2 regions in Bulgaria (2008)**
Source: Bulgaria. Geografski atlas, 2010

2) This was the third modification of the borders and areas of the regions in Bulgaria. The first planning regions were established in 1999, then modified in 2004.

The existing intraregional differences at district (NUTS 3) and municipal (LAU 1) level are not an object of study in the current research.

Regardless of the changes in the regional scheme which occurred in 2008, considerable territorial differentiation between regions is presently observed. The South-West and the South Central region continue to be remarkable for the most significant demographic and economic potential (Table 1).

Table 1

Main characteristics of NUTS 2 regions in Bulgaria

NUTS 2 regions	Territory		Population (2012)		Gross domestic product (2011)	GDP per capita, Bulgaria =100 (2011)	GDP per capita, PPS, EU=100 (2009)	Employed (2012)	Employment rate, population aged 20 to 64 years (2011)
	Sq. km	%	Th. pers.	%	%			%	%
North-West	19070.3	17.18	823.5	11.3	7.1	61.9	27	9.7	58.5
North Central	14997.4	13.51	844.5	11.6	7.8	66.7	29	10.8	59.8
North-East	14487.4	13.05	957.5	13.1	10.6	80.9	36	12.4	61.0
South-East	19798.8	17.83	1068.0	14.7	12.0	81.7	36	14.4	62.9
South Central	22365.0	20.14	1462.3	20.1	13.9	69.3	31	19.4	61.2
South-West	20306.4	18.29	2128.8	29.2	48.6	167.6	75	33.3	71.2
Bulgaria	111002	100	7284.6	100	100	100	44	100	63.9

Data source: NSI, National Regional Development Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2012-2022

The existing studies, which evaluate territorial (regional) differences, have applied both single indicators and combinations of different indicators or integral indicators (Marinov and Ivanov 2002, Yankova et al. 2003, Roussev 2005, Yankova 2008, Ilieva 2010, 2011, 2012, National Regional Development Strategy 2012, Ianoş et al. 2013). The analysis shows that regardless of the number and use of various indicators, most research on territorial differences is comparative in nature. The most used indicators are: gross domestic product, gross domestic product per capita, foreign direct investments, different demographic indicators, levels of employment and unemployment, etc. The recent strategic documents in compliance with the goals of achieving smart, sustainable and cohesive growth determine as the most important indicators: GDP per capita, the employment rate, the R&D spending as percentage of GDP, the power generated from renewable energy sources, the share of university graduates, the dropout rate (18–24 year-olds) (“Europe 2020” Strategy and interrelated with its national documents in Bulgaria – National Regional Development Strategy 2012 (NRDS), National Reform Programme, 2012, National Concept for Spatial Development 2012).

In accordance with its aim, both types of indicators were applied in the current paper, rated as

very important in "Europe 2020", together with some other indicators. For a better comparison, some of the indicators are calculated on a per capita basis. In order to achieve better comparability, the mean national values of the indicators or average EU value were used in the process of territorial differences study.

The investigation is based on the current statistical data for the period covering the last two decades or last years (until 2012). There are many difficulties with statistical data collection, caused by insufficient and non-comparable data, lack of statistical rows for longer periods, changes in the regional schemes of the country (1999, 2004, 2008), etc. The statistical data is obtained from the National Statistical Institute, the National Employment Agency, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Finance, EUROSTAT, the national strategic and planning documents, as well as author's publications.

Results and Discussion

The cohesion of the development level of the individual regions[3)] is one of the goals existing for a long time in the documents for regional development in Bulgaria. This was one of main goals of regional development in the period of command planned economy and permanently in all plans and strategies, prepared in compliance with the European regional policy from the end of 1990s till nowadays (McCann and Ortega-Argilés 2013). Various measures that aimed at achieving this goal have been applied during that period. It was expected also that the elaboration of regions in 2008, which would be more similar in area, demographic and economic potential, would favour the regional cohesion.

The study of regional development shows significant territorial differences between individual regions in Bulgaria, differences that have even increased during recent years. Several main indicators revealing certain aspects of the NUTS 2 regions' disparities in Bulgaria are used in this paper. Many researchers accept the gross domestic product (GDP) as one of the most commonly used parameters in the presentation of regional differences both in individual countries and across regions (Bracalente and Perugini 2010, Ilieva 2010, 2011, 2012, Ianoş et al. 2013). Data analysis of GDP, generated in different regions, indicates significant territorial differences between them. A different degree of dispersion is observed between the regions, depending on their relative share of the country. The large South-West and South Central regions produce both over 62% of the national GDP (as of 2011). The contribution of the South -West region alone is almost half of the country's GDP as of today (Table 1). The analysis of the proportion of the best and the worst region has also confirmed the increase of the interregional inequalities between regions (Ilieva 2010, Ilieva 2012). The proportion of the best developed region (South-West) and of the least developed region (North-West) in terms of GDP was rising steadily[4)] in the 1995-2011 period from 2,7:1 (1995), 3,4:1 (1999), 4,3:1 (2005) to 6,85:1 (2011). Studies of Czyż (1998) and Hrubi (2002) show similar relations between territorial units in Poland and Hungary in the 1990s.

Significant differences between regions are observed in levels of GDP per capita as well (Fig. 2). Analysis on the proportion of the share of the best and the worst region in the 1996-2007 period showed the increase in interregional inequalities between the South-West region and the other five regions (Ilieva 2010, Ilieva 2012). The trend towards growing regional differences continued during the 2006-2011 period as well (Fig. 3). But the change of the regional scheme

3) Called differently in various periods: economic regions, socio-economic regions, planning regions, regions level 2 or NUTS2 regions.

4) Regions in the respective scope over the years.

in 2008 slightly affected the differences between regions. A study by Rangelova (2011) also confirmed growing differences between regions during the period 1995-2008, measured by the coefficient of variation.

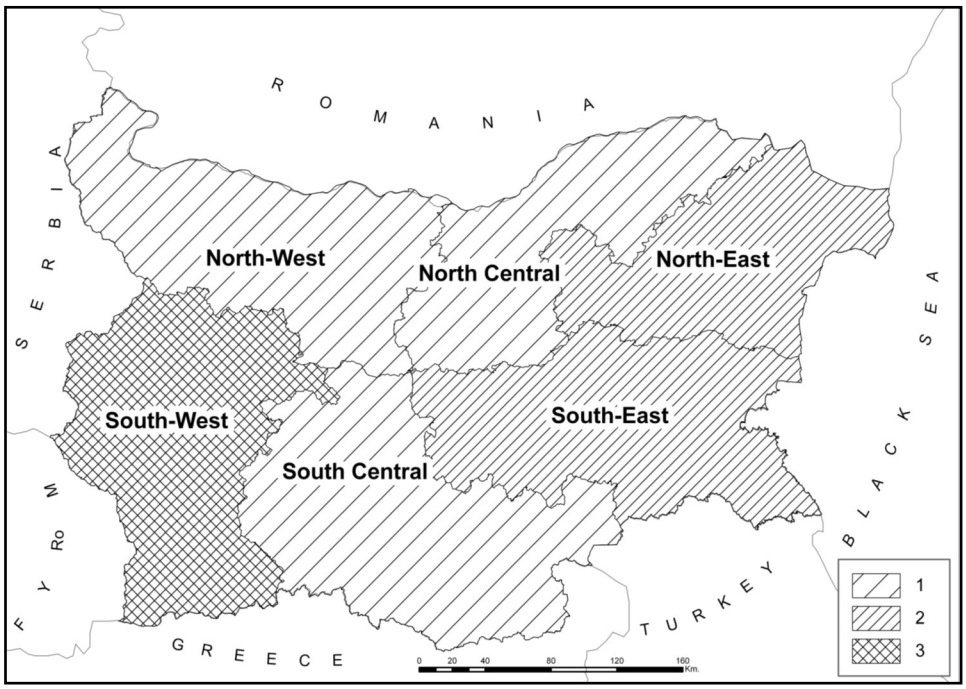

Fig. 2 - **Gross Domestic Product per capita by NUTS 2 in Bulgaria (BGN, 2011)**
1 – 6000-8000; 2 – 8001-10 000; 3 – over 17000.
Data source: National Statistical Institute

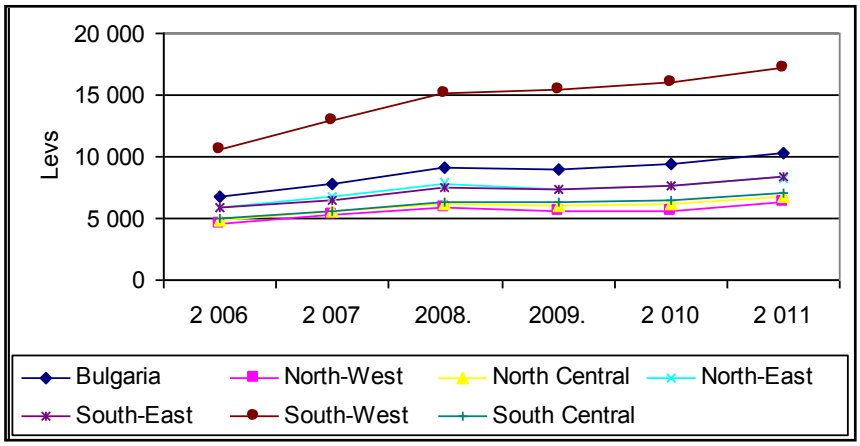

Fig. 3 - **GDP per capita by NUTS 2 regions in Bulgaria (2006-2011)**
Data source: www.nsi.bg/ORPDOCS/GDP_1.1.4.xls

The degree of dispersion between the regions in the best and in the worst position, measured by this indicator, is also increasing. The relation between the region in the best position and the region in the worst position increased from 2,27:1 (2006) to 2,70:1 (2011), while relations between the region in the best position and the region which ranks second grew from 1,78:1 (2006) to 2,05:1 (2011). The gap between the South-West region and the remaining five regions is resulting from the regions' development and ongoing transformation processes. The differences increased despite the measures for regional cohesion implemented in the ongoing regional policy on the country. A comparison makes it clear that throughout the period 1996-2011, the South-West region has always been in the best position. The close values of the indicator for the other five areas are the reason for frequent changing of their positions. In some years, the same regions pass from the second to the worst position, or vice versa, e.g. the North-West, South-Central, etc. During the period 2006-2011 the South-East and the North-East regions were ranked second with very close value of the indicators.

A comparison of the gross domestic product per capita in different regions shows the formation of two sets of NUTS 2 regions in Bulgaria. The South-West region, which is increasingly "drifting away" from the other regions, belongs to the first one (Fig. 4). The ratios at the beginning and at the end of the period suggest a positive trend only in the South-West region, due to its most intensive economic development. As of 2009, "this region is close to the average level of European regions and has the potential to become a region *in transition* with GDP per capita above 75% of the EU average" (National Regional 2012: 58). The analysis of regional economic development and intraregional differences proves the importance of the district of the Sofia capital city in it. The South-West region and the district of the Sofia capital city are the territorial units with the highest concentration of economic activity and capacity for development in the country. "The capital city agglomeration dominates the national arena much more strongly than in the past and exacerbates the centre versus periphery problem in the country" (National Regional 2012: 58).

The remaining five regions – the North-West, the North Central, the North-East, the South-East and the South Central region, form the second set of regions. Their values are approximately equal, regardless of the regional scheme used. In each of them, one or two of the other major cities and economic centers in the country are situated – Plovdiv, Varna, Bourgas, Rousse, Stara Zagora, Pleven. These five Bulgarian regions, together with the five regions in Romania, form the group of the ten poorest regions in the European Union (2005 d.) (Horvath 2009). In the enlarged EU 27, the poorest regions in Bulgaria and Romania have taken the place of the poorest regions of Poland in EU25. According to the 2009 data, the North-West region of Bulgaria is the poorest region in the EU27. The differences between these five regions in respect to the relations with the EU average GDP per capita in PPS are very small – from 27 to 36% (Table 1).

"Regional growth and development are very closely related to the activities of innovative Entrepreneurs" (Batabyal and Beladi 2013: 2). The comparison of the number of foreign firms per millions of inhabitants in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Poland on the base of Pusterla, Resmini (2007) investigation, shows lower investments in the period 1995-2001 and unfavourable structure of the FDI in Bulgaria. Significant regional dispersion exists in the territorial distribution of the enterprises and their production. Most of the enterprises are localised in the South-West region, where the highest coefficient of entrepreneurship is observed. The rest of the regions can be divided into two groups by that indicator (Fig. 5). The increase in the number, production, employed personnel, revenue of enterprises, of their competitiveness, especially of SMEs, would contribute to better regional economic and social development. "Jump-starting the specific potential of regional and local economies by providing

support for increasing the competitiveness of small and medium businesses" (National Regional 2012: 112) is one of the priority goals, determined for attaining economic cohesion. The support of "regional development will be oriented towards such economic activities in the regions that stimulate the development and utilization of local potential, which in turn will contribute to the diversification of the economic structure of the regions and will create, in the long run, new jobs that would be attractive and suitable for young people's occupational fulfilment" (National Regional 2012: 112). In the processes of this priority realization, special attention should be paid to the least developed North-West and North Central regions.

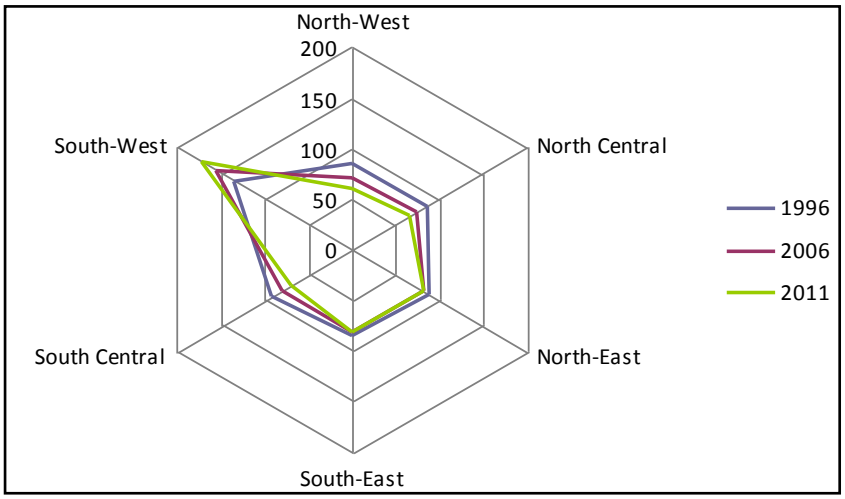

Fig. 4 - **Gross domestic product per capita by regions (Bulgaria = 100)** [5)]
Source: author's calculations based on the National Statistical Institute's data

Many small and medium-sized enterprises in Bulgaria are new or relatively new, young, established in the period after 1989. Behind the decline of many enterprises and loss of very big number working places, as a result of the establishment and the development of SMEs, the number of new jobs and the employed increased, as well as the incomes and the number of entrepreneurs. According to Bosma and Schutjens (2011), "spatial differences in entrepreneurial attitude and activities may be the result of both a *regional demography* (an overrepresentation of groups of individuals with high entrepreneurial spirits or involvement in entrepreneurial behaviour), specific *regional economic attributes* (f. i. market opportunities), and *an institutional component"* (p. 713).

The development of entrepreneurship favours the development of regional and local economy, its diversification, especially the economy based on the region's own resources. Entrepreneurship also affects positively the development of private business initiatives, the increasing of competitiveness and also leads to more successful economic growth in separate settlements and regions in the country. In the same time, many efforts are still needed for nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit, experience and culture, because the lack of private ownership in the country till the end of 1980s, and, as a result, the lack of entrepreneurial culture and experience, except for their relatively short development over the last two decades. The situation in Poland, Hungary and other countries concerning the transforming economy is

5) Existing Regions according to the respective regional scheme over the years.

different – in those countries, due to the development of the private activities during the socialist period, entrepreneurial experience and culture were accumulated by generations of people. As Bosma and Schutjens (2011) underlines: "actively stimulating or creating such an entrepreneurial culture is far from easy, and takes time" (p. 739).

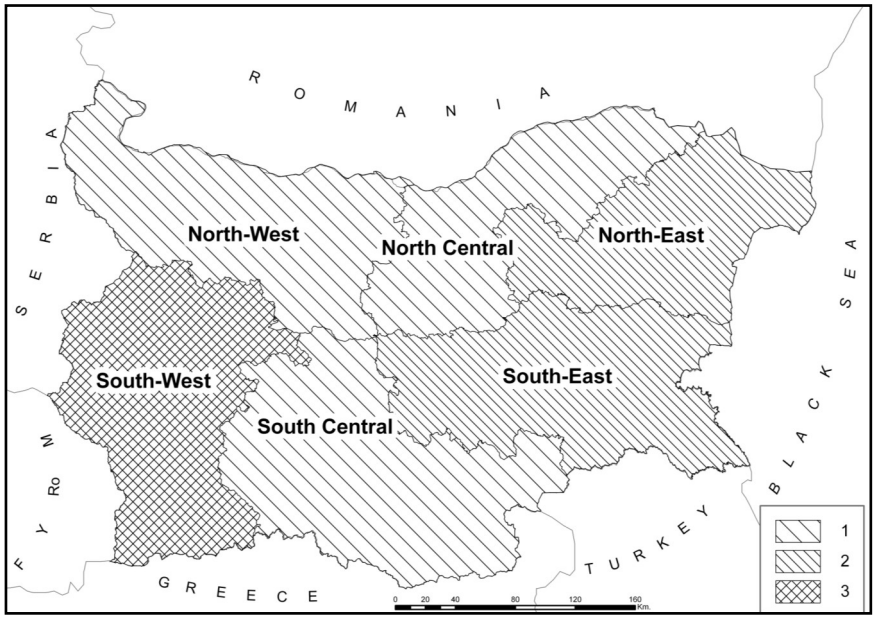

Fig. 5 - **Coefficient of entrepreneurship by NUTS 2 in Bulgaria (2011)**
Number of enterprises, excl. financial, per 1000 persons of the population:
1 – till 45; 2 – 45-55; 3 – more than 60
Data source: author's calculation based on the National Statistical Institute's data

The analysis of some indicators, concerning the demographic development and the functioning of labour market in different parts of the country, also shows significant regional differences. The decrease of population in the period of 1985-2012, the negative natural increase of population during the last two decades, and the deteriorated age structure of the population adversely affect the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of labour force in separate regions. The regional disparities in the decline of the number of population and in the changes of labour force are characterized by various specificities and trends, which depend on the number and age structure of the population, on its ethnic composition, on the socio-economic situation in the country and in the respective regions.

The biggest share of the population, the labour force and the number of employed people are concentrated in the largest South-West and South Central regions – almost half of the country's population and over 52% of the employed (Table 1). Significant regional disparities can be noticed in the employment rate, regardless of the mode of determination. The regions form two groups by the employment rate, measured for the population aged 20 to 64 years in compliance with the "Europe 2020" Strategy (Table 1) or for the population aged 15+ years according to the National Statistical Institute (Fig. 6) or the Employment Agency in Bulgaria. Five of the regions have lower value of the indicators, similar to each other, and only the South-West region is in a better position (Table 1, Fig. 6).

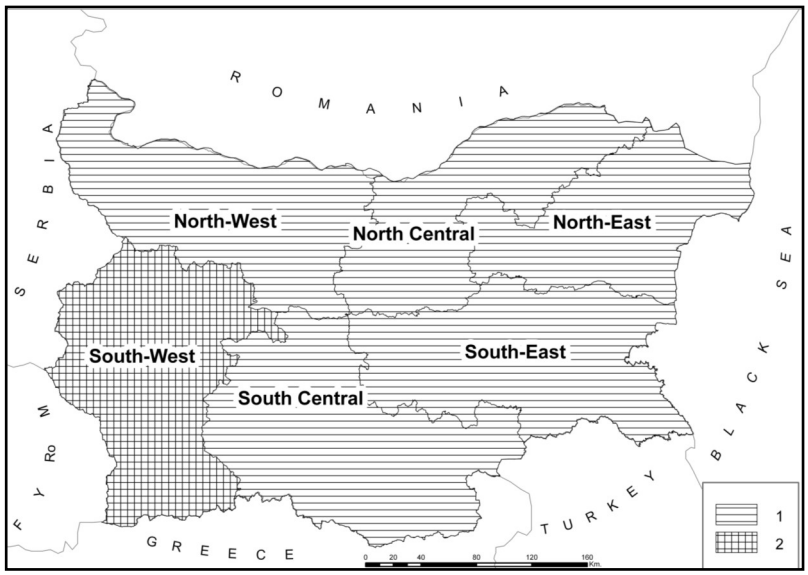

Fig. 6 - **Employment rate of the population aged 15 + years by NUTS 2 in Bulgaria (2012)**
1 – 39-47%; 2 – over 52%
Data source: National Statistical Institute

The employment rate decline, observed in Bulgaria in the recent years, is related also to the world economic crisis impact. "Up until 2008, the employment coefficient for people between the age of 20 and 64 grew from 58.0% in 2003 to 70.7% in 2008. After 2008, there has been a major decline in the employment rates, especially in comparison with the EU average at the backdrop of countries having debt problems (Greece, Ireland and Spain). In 2009, this coefficient plunged to 68.8%, while in 2011 it was 63.9% versus the EU27 average of 68.6%" (National Regional 2012: 53). For the moment, Bulgaria has a low employment rate (population aged 20 to 64 years) in comparison with many EU states (Fig. 7). This indicator is also lower in comparison with the provided values of 75% in 2020 in the "Europe 2020" Strategy and of 76% in the national documents, such as the National Regional Development Strategy 2012-2022 (2012), the National Reform Programme Bulgaria 2020 (2012), etc. This fact needs a solution for many tasks in order to get a more successful economic development, the creation of new workplaces, the increase in the number of employed people, etc. Solely the South-West region has values close to the ones determined in these documents (Table 1).

In order to integrate "the goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy and National Development Programme Bulgaria 2020 into country's regional development policy", the National Regional Development Strategy 2012-2022 (2012) has formulated the following vision for the country's regional development during the 2012-2022: Regions in Bulgaria have to become "attractive to live in, making the most of their potential for sustainable growth, job creation, business and tourism, with well-preserved natural and cultural heritage" (p. 108). The goals for attaining cohesion on different levels – Bulgaria-EU, regional, intraregional, are determined as follows: "Economic cohesion in a European, national and intra-regional context through development of the regions' own potential and environmental protection", "Social cohesion and reduction of regional disparities in the social sphere through opportunities for development and realization of human capital", "Territorial cohesion and development of cross-border, inter-regional and

trans-national cooperation" and "Balanced territorial development through strengthening the network of urban centers, improving connectivity in the regions and the quality of the urban environment in populated areas". For the realization of those goals by 2020, various measures and interventions are envisaged in urban centers and their industrial zones, in underdeveloped, rural and target support areas, in regions and municipalities.

In this paper only two factors, influencing the regional development in the next two decades, are taken into consideration – the expected financial support and the demographic conditions. The general estimate of necessary resources according to the National Regional Development Strategy 2012-2022 (2012) is about 17.8 billion BGN (about 9.1 billion EUR). Significant financial support is expected from the EU Funds (about 13.1 billion BGN). "In line with the criterion used in the EU for supporting the least developed regions, defined by a relative threshold of 75% of the average GDP per capita, it can be assumed that three of the regions in Bulgaria are currently below this threshold: NWR, NCR and SCR. Therefore, the prevailing part of the resources for regional development will be allocated in support to these regions" (National Regional 2012: 140). That is why 53.5% of all envisaged funds are targeted for the three least developed regions – North-West, North Central and South Central one (Fig. 8).

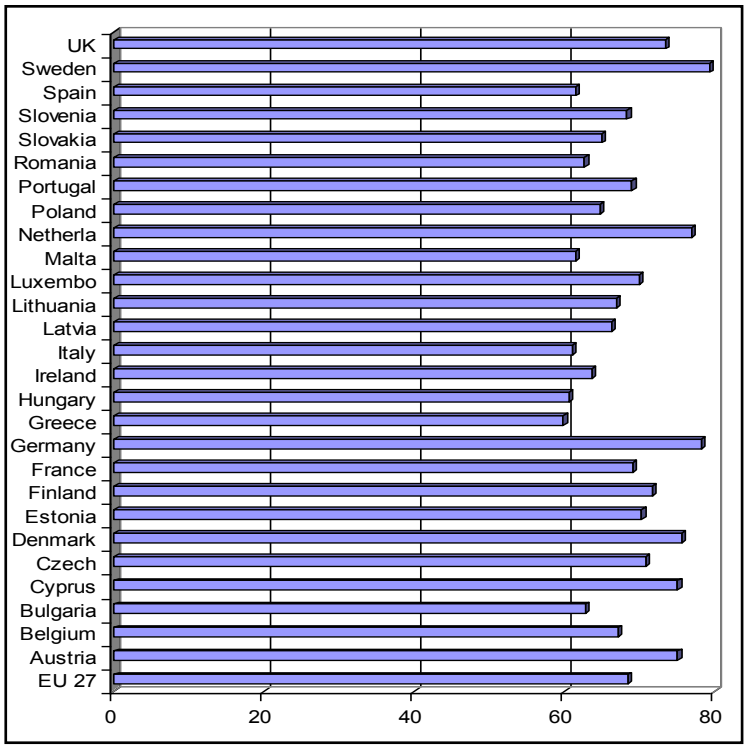

Fig. 7 - **Employment rate of the population aged 20 to 64 years in the EU countries (2011)**
Data source: http://epp.eurostst.ec.europa.eu

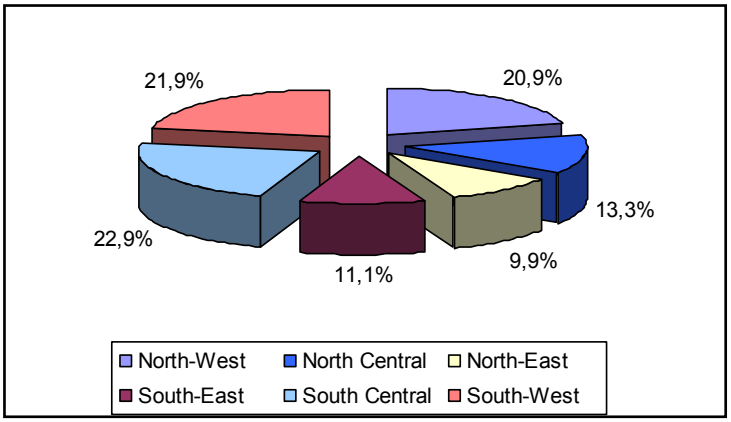

Fig. 8 - **Distribution of necessary financial resources for regional development by NUTS 2 regions in Bulgaria (2014-2020)**
Data source: Author's calculation based on National Regional Development Strategy 2012-2020 (2012)'s data

The processes of reducing the disparities occur in a very complicated demographic situation – the decrease of population number, the negative natural increase of the population, the deteriorating age structure, etc. According to the National Concept for Spatial Development for the period 2013-2025 (2012), "one of the most serious challenges the country is going to be faced with in the coming decades will be the demographic crisis in all its multi-faceted manifestations. The population of Europe will continue to diminish because of the delayed reforms in the policies of most countries with respect to supporting the family values, the birth rate growth and the retention of young educated people. Bulgaria makes no exception to the rule and follows the trends of the more developed countries, therefore all the possible demographic scenarios envisage population drop" (p. 26). According to the elaborated prognoses, the existing unfavourable trends in the number dynamics and in the demographic indicators will be preserved in the future. A decrease of the population number in the country to about 6.95 million people by 2020 is expected, about 6.7 million by 2025 and 5.7 million by 2050, according to the National Statistical Institute's prognoses. The adverse demographic trends and the limited supply of labour are recognized as a threat to Bulgaria's labour market development by both experts in this field and by the Updated Employment Strategy (Aktualizirana Strategia 2013) as well.

The achievement of goals, priorities and objectives of the NRDS, of course, will lead to the mitigation of regional differences and cohesion of regional development. Due to large existing disparities at present-day stage, this process may take very long. The analysis of the baseline and target values of several indicators[6)], listed in the NRDS (2012), shows that a different degree of regional disparities' reduction is expected till 2020. The decreasing of the dispersion between the region in the best position (South-West) and the region in the worst position (North -West) is an evidence for the process of mitigation of the present differences between the NUTS 2 regions in Bulgaria by selected indicators (Table 2).

Bulgaria is expected "to achieve the average level of socio-economic development in the EU by attaining the kind of growth that is smart, sustainable, inclusive and gentle on the environment

6) Several indicators related to this study are selected.

and natural resources" (National Regional 2012: 108), as a result of the achievement of intended goals in the national documents, related to the "Europe 2020" Strategy for regional development and for socio-economic development of the country till the 2020 time horizon.

Table 2

Envisaged values of selected indicators for regional cohesion in Bulgaria

	NUTS 2 regions						
	North-West	**North Central**	**North-East**	**South-East**	**South Central**	**South-West**	**Bulgaria**
	Employment of population aged 20-64 years						
Baseline values as 2009-2010	63.1	62.9	63.9	64.4	65.4	73.4	66.8
Target values for 2020	72	72	74	75	77	80	76
	Share of people aged 30-34 with higher education						
Baseline values (2010)	22	20.9	22.6	19.9	19.2	41	27.3
Target values for 2020	35	34	36	32	29	50	36
	Share of people employed in SMEs in the country (total)						
Baseline values (2010)	7.9	10.3	12.3	13.2	18.4	37.9	100
Target values for 2020	8.2	10.5	12.5	13	18.2	37.6	100

Data source: National Regional Development Strategy 2012-2020 (2012)

Conclusions

On the basis of the analysis and the comparison of some single indicators, this study presents significant regional differences in Bulgaria. The research shows the formation of two sets of regions with different socio-economic development at the present-day stage – the better economic developed South-West region on one pole, and all the remainder five less-developed regions make up a second one .

Regardless of the ongoing target regional policy, disparities between NUTS 2 regions in Bulgaria continued to increase in the last two decades. Through various measures and interventions, embedded in national documents, which are interrelated with the "Europe 2020" Strategy, the reduction of regional differences is provided, as well as gradual economic, social and territorial cohesion in the regions' development.

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HOPES FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE'S FUTURE. AN ANALYSIS OF TWO ENDOGENOUS DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES IN SOUTH-EASTERN GALICIA

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Abstract: The Galician countryside is commonly interpreted as being dominated by a deep socio-economic depression that even the reception of generous European Union rural and regional development funds over the last few decades has not been able to overcome. The aim of this paper is to refine this negative understanding at regional scale by examining specific case-studies at local level through a qualitative study of two self-proclaimed "rural development centres" located in south-eastern Galicia (the province of Ourense). The research is carried out within a theoretical framework on development, based mainly on the core notion of endogenous development. After outlining the regional setting, the selected experiences in the hamlets of Lodoselo (municipality of Sarreaus, district of A Limia) and Arzádegos (municipality of Vilardevós, district of Val de Monterrei) are analysed. The paper concludes by discussing to what extent both initiatives follow endogenous development conception and contribute towards real rural development, thus avoiding the bleak regional picture. The relevance of qualitative readings is stressed in this respect.

Key Words: *Sustainable / rural / regional / endogenous / neo-endogenous development, demographic ageing and depopulation, agriculture and tourism in rural areas, qualitative research methodology, province of Ourense (Galicia, Spain, European Union).*

Introduction

It is plainly clear that there is a widespread perception that rural Galicia is presently undergoing a profound crisis. In the Galician countryside, districts in the province of Ourense[1)] are considered to be in a particularly delicate state. Thus, in a geographical analysis, Lois (2004: 123-124) states that "in many parts of the province of Ourense" we observe "an invading sense of slowdown", loss of population "at an alarming rate", "a shockingly ageing population" and "communities overtaken by a sense of resignation and despair". In the same vein, a sociological study argues that 8 out of the 12 districts in the province of Ourense (along with 4 in the province of Lugo) show the poorest situation in Galicia through "excessive and disturbing demographic decline" (Trabada 2007: 32). According to this author, these districts are characterised through "a low-spirited atmosphere of socio-cultural and economic decline, one which lacks the trappings and dynamic relationships and does not make young people and young families feel at ease" (Trabada 2007: 41). In short, the overall Galician countryside

1) Galicia, with 2.772.928 inhabitants (2011 census data) on 29.574 km^2, is administratively divided into four provinces, which approximately covers a quadrant each (Fig. 1). Ourense is located in the south-eastern quadrant, with 333.257 inhabitants (2011) and 7.273 km^2. While the density of the Galician population is 94 inhabitants/km^2, the province of Ourense registers less than half of the said indicator. The provinces are divided into districts (53 in the whole of Galicia; Fig. 1), municipalities (315; Fig. 1) and parishes (officially, 3.772). In total, there are more than 30.000 rural hamlets, a pattern that has traditionally led to talk of a dispersed rural population.

"shows constant population loss due to an overwhelmingly aged population in its demographic structure, with a very low number of young and a highly negative natural balance. Economic prospects are based on shrinking farms [...] and external subsidies through retirement pensions" (Aldrey 2006: 32).

To overcome this critical situation, a rural development policy, of more than 20 years of uninterrupted history in Galicia, has been implemented through European Union (EU) funds. To this end, the province of Ourense has been especially targeted. This policy has not only been driven through the LEADER programme (or PRODER and AGADER in the Galician case, both equivalents to LEADER), but also through the ERDF regional funds. Most reviews on the incidence of such rural and regional development funds in Spain are positive — see, for instance, García-Rodríguez et al. (2005), Plaza (2005), Molinero et al. (2004) or Doval (2002). Nevertheless, literature shows a less favourable perception in Galicia. For example, Lois (2004: 114) has spoken of a "very poor management of EU funds" and Trabada (2007: 460) has noted that these programmes have been appropriated "by the local authorities and interested groups linked to political parties, which have guided actions towards municipal infrastructure and facilities", but with uncertain effects on the real economy. Tourism in Galicia has been conceived as a choice strategy within the paradigm of rural and regional development (Santos 2012, Santos and Paül 2011, Lois and Santos 2004). Notwithstanding, there is an agreement on the excessive weight given to the said mechanism of development. Moreover, there are many voices pointing to its plausible failure, evidenced by the very low annual occupancy in rural tourism accommodation businesses (below the threshold of profitability) and the suspicion of the fraudulent use of these funds destined for business creation (in the hands of entrepreneurs), which eventually have been destined to the rehabilitation of private homes.

Given this bleak picture that affects the state of rural areas and development policies, the aim of this paper is to refine the negative interpretation at regional scale by analysing two specific cases. Both share the fact that they have not been proposed or implemented by the political-institutional system, rather, both have emerged from civil society. The two initiatives under consideration are the following associations, self-proclaimed "rural development centres": *O Viso* (in the hamlet and parish of Lodoselo, municipality of Sarreaus, district of A Limia) and *Portas Abertas* (in the hamlet and parish of Arzádegos, municipality of Vilardevós, in the district of Val de Monterrei) (Fig. 1). The two cases are located in south-eastern Galicia (the province of Ourense), a region that is considered to be the most critical in Galicia. Through detailed observation of these cases, we obtain a richer view of the complexity of rural Galicia, which is commonly interpreted as being under the simplistic umbrella of the dominating general depression. There are few case studies on local experiences in Galicia such as those that will be the subject of attention here, so that, through this contribution, we aim to contribute to filling the gap.

The remainder of this paper is organised as follows. The next theoretical section sets out a conceptualisation on *development,* leading towards *endogenous development*, the core notion in this research. This is followed by an explanation of the adopted methodology, which is two-fold: quantitative for a regional analysis of the province of Ourense and qualitative for examining the particular case-studies. The paper then turns to outline the regional setting and the case-studies analysis results. The text concludes by discussing the empirical findings and exploring the implications of both experiences in terms of rural development.

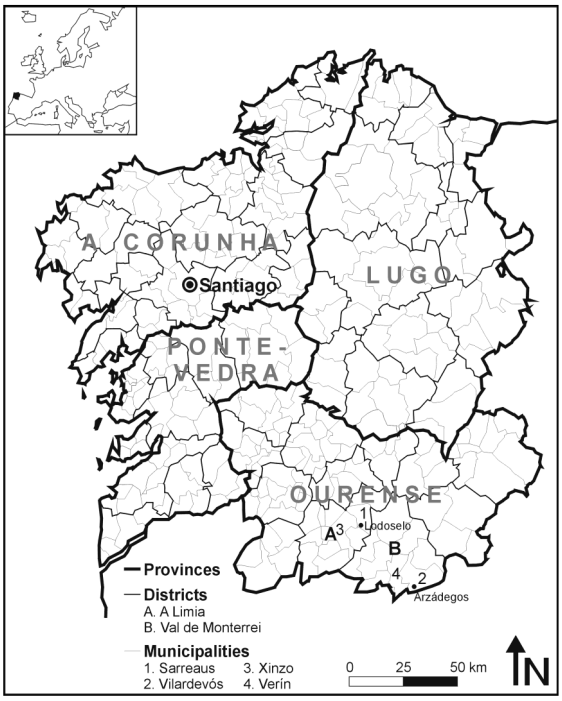

Fig. 1 - **Location map of the study area**

Current notions of *development*

There appears to be a high degree of consensus over the difference between the notions of *development* and *growth* (Brinkman 1995). *Growth* is understood as an increase in physical quantities, while *development* is the progress in skills, qualities or potentials (Ojeda 2003, 2004). "Given the linear nature and quantity of growth, development is a multidimensional concept — quantitative and qualitative at a time — that incorporates the principles of balance in distribution, autonomy in decision making, quality of life, creativity, level of enjoyment and so on" (Ojeda 2003: 54). Indeed, that economic or population growth (quantitative aspects) happens in a particular region or country does not automatically imply that it leads to development (qualitative aspect). In fact, sometimes the need for growth can compromise or destroy the pillars of a culture, with which "development" would actually mean a deceptive and isolated growth (Ojeda 2002). The decoupling of these notions has been expressed by Pike et al. (2007: 1260), as follows: "Localities and regions can experience 'development' in quantitative terms [growth] but with a problematic qualitative dimension […]. Similarly, localities and regions can witness qualitative 'development' that is quantitatively problematic". In reality, it is difficult to have any developed society or region without any growth (Galdeano-Gómez et al. 2011), although the latter must be at least socially and geographically distributed for the former to happen (Ojeda 2003, 2004). This is usually known in European technocratic terms as "social cohesion" and "territorial cohesion", respectively (Davoudi et al. 2009). Indeed, Haslam McKenzie (2013) has demonstrated that experiencing high economic growth rates in a given region does not mean development for communities in this region.

Following this conception, development seems impossible if the population has no self-esteem, if inhabitants do not identify with their landscape, if there is no maintenance of their own identity and no sense of being part of a community, if there is not any show of living cultural specificity, no respect for inherited traditional knowledge and heritage, etc. (Markantoni et al. 2012, Ojeda 2003, 2004, Ray 2000a). "'Development' (whatever the term means) works best if the orthodox expert-designed-and-evaluated model is exchanged for one that emphasises the humanistic, dynamic and contextual possibilities of development. […] Development […] is an on-going dialogue, experiment or multiple exploration" (Ray 2000b: 451-452). This line of thought on development abounds in Latin America, with quite consistent standpoints — see, for instance, Vázquez-Barquero (2009) or Capalbo (2008).

Departing from this significant distinction, the popular notion of *sustainability* is much more related to the concept of *development* than to that of *growth.* Indeed, *sustainable development* is, according to the reputed Brundtland report, "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987: 43). This definition implies intergenerational solidarity and collective responsibility, issues that are qualitative and hardly reduced to rates, ratios or formulas. "For many scientists the authentic contradiction is only given in the meaning of *sustainable growth*, based on the philosophy of continuous growth, while the concept of *sustainable development* is considered more congruent" (Anton and Gonzàlez-Reverté 2005: 49). Naredo (2007) has summarised it in an axiom "unsustainable growth, sustainable development", and Mikkelson (2013) has reported how growth leads towards greater levels of resource consumption and waste production, and thus inequality and unsustainability.

Sustainable development is necessarily inclusive and covers a wide range of issues, according to the evolution of development ideas since the 1970s, from a historically dominant focus upon economic development, towards embracing social, ecological, political and cultural concerns (Pike et al. 2007). This contradicts a significant body of literature on rural geography that conflates *sustainable development* into *economic growth*. In this context and in times of the current global crisis, the timely theoretical proposals for *degrowth*, *non-growth* or *serene degrowth* as "alternatives" share a critique of the notion of *growth* and the need to focus on the idea of *development,* as respectively defended by Taibo (2009) in the Spanish-speaking world, Jackson (2009) in the Anglo-Saxon world or Latouche (2007) in the Francophone world.

The application of the notion of development across rural areas in the EU[2)] from the Commission's milestone paper *The Future of Rural Society* (1988) eventually led, since its establishment in 1991, to the beginning of LEADER[3)] policies and, to a great extent, the perception of tourism as a solution to rural development (Böcher 2008, Lois and Santos 2004,

2) Practically speaking, in the EU context, regional and rural development policies have "conflated" (Woods 2005: 145).

3) Acronym for *Liaisons entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale*, it constitutes a European initiative launched in 1991, given that the Commission acquired the power to introduce its own pilot interventions (so-called 'initiatives') in 1988. It had three phases (LEADER I, 1991-94; LEADER II, 1994-99; LEADER+, 2000-6) where specific rural regions were selected to encourage development projects and actions based on local strategies, allegedly driven by participative partnerships on the ground consisting of community associations, businesses, public sector bodies, etc. In the period 2007-2013, the LEADER approach has been integrated into the official rural development programmes (RDPs) of all the regions of the Union, a change of reference frame that has been labelled as "LEADER mainstreaming" (Dax et al. 2013); it has been argued that in this latter period the LEADER as it used to be has been diluted. In any case, this EU initiative has attracted considerable academic attention (High and Nemes 2007).

Ray 2000a, Woods 2005). "The most accepted trend over the last two or three decades in European rural development policy […] (for example, the LEADER programme) has been to promote increasing diversification in order to accommodate various economic activities" (Galdeano-Gómez et al. 2011: 56), in a shift that has commonly been coined as "from production to consumption" (Marsden 1999, Scott et al. 2011, Woods 2005, Ray 2000a). The transition from a rural economy based on agriculture to a diversified economy has been widespread — that is, the *multifunctionality* or *pluriactivity* paradigm (McDonagh 2013, Wilson 2007, Plaza 2006, van der Ploeg et al. 2000, Marsden 1999), despite having received severe criticism (Evans et al. 2002). There is an ongoing debate on the role the farming sector should play in rural development (among others, Galdeano-Gómez et al. 2011 or van der Ploeg et al. 2000).

On the one hand, the majority of opinions point to the need to address the challenge by giving a pivotal role to tourism — several authors are reported in this respect by Markantoni et al. (2012). In short, "rural development is *multi-facetted* in nature. It unfolds into a wide array of different and sometimes interconnected practices. Among them are landscape management, the conservation of new nature values, agritourism […]", given that "there is an entrenched assumption that the agricultural sector is incapable of generating rural renewal" (van der Ploeg et al. 2000: 394, 401) and that "the focus on agriculture as the main activity [is] misleading" (Galdeano-Gómez et al. 2011: 57). Some scholars have even argued that the future for the countryside is "in many ways post-agricultural" (Halfacree 1997: 72). In other words, under this perspective, "Rural areas have to make use of other potentials [rather than agriculture] for development, such as their recreational value for urbanites or their natural beauty to attract for tourists" (Böcher 2008: 378).

On the other hand, some of the current literature tends to argue that the agricultural and livestock sector must remain the core (for a review of these opinions, see McDonagh 2013) and activities such as tourism should be complementary, not dominant. In this sense, it has been said that "the new economic activities to give impetus in regressive rural areas should be based to a great extent, and contrary to many theories on development, strengthening agriculture, livestock and forestry sectors" (Lois 2004: 125). That is to say "rural development can be constructed very effectively by using the innovativeness and entrepreneurial skills present in the agricultural industry itself" (van der Ploeg et al. 2000: 401). Therefore, this perspective gives room for a "new position for agriculture" through "viable agricultures [contributing] to maintain viable rural communities" (Banks and Marsden 2000: 466).

Overall, the literature on rural development focuses on the analysis of the intervention by national (and sub- and supra- national) administrations (Dax et al. 2013, Rodríguez-Pose 2013, Böcher 2008, Plaza 2006, Ray 2006, 2000a, 2000b), either to criticise or to praise, or to explain what has been done or what should be done. In fact, van der Ploeg et al. (2000: 396) and Ray (2000a: 85) have detected that rural development "has become part of political discourse" and most of the literature is devoted to considering this domain. There is some contradiction between this mainstream literature and our outlined theory on development. Indeed, if in this notion local potentials (resources, human capital, and so on) are central, why focus on the investments that are made by the public sector through funds coming from outside local communities? In this respect, Lois and Santos (2004: 142) have speculatively formulated the idea of *spontaneous development*, which refers to those processes that improve the quality of rural life, beyond that of public authorities. In a more founded line of thought, Vázquez-Barquero (2006, 2009) has reported on *endogenous development*. This concept is shared with a long list of authors from its origins set in the 1970s and, since then, several perspectives to this respect have been generated but have not always coincided (Galdeano-Gómez et al. 2011, Vázquez-Barquero 2006, 2007).

Basically, *endogenous development* offers an interpretation of development *from* the local communities, not *for* the local communities, and sees civil society and local stakeholders as having a key role in generating development. "Endogeneity […] is based […] on a critique of an over-dependency on, and vulnerability to, development designed and controlled by 'extra-local' forces" (Ray 2000b: 447), and thus "sees the key challenge as valorising difference through the nurturing of locally distinctive human and environmental capacities" (Galdeano-Gómez et al. 2011: 59). Therefore, endogenous development is "constructed from economic, social, environmental, institutional, political and cultural factors that are uniquely combined in each locality, and in each region", for that reason "upholding that development initiative differs from one area to another, from one locality to another" (Vázquez-Barquero 2007: 206). According to Ray (2000a, 2000b, 2006), Garofoli (2002), Woods (2005) or Gkartzios and Scott (2013), endogenous models of development search for resources and mechanisms that focus on the local territorial level, and they emphasize local participation and control.

The above mentioned EU LEADER initiative has allegedly been framed on the endogenous approach (Furmankiewicz et al. 2010, Böcher 2008, High and Nemes 2007, Ray 2000a, 2000b, 2006), given that LEADER policy-makers defend that endogenous potentials of rural regions are the basis of rural development strategies. However, there is considerable debate as to what extent endogenous development may be turned into policy prescriptions and actions, given that it is basically spontaneous and, in this sense, endogenous development policies seem to be more aspirational than operational, or even rhetorical or heuristic (McDonagh 2013, High and Nemes 2007, Ray 2006). This discussion in line with the approaches asserting that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' development model or template (Rodríguez-Pose 2013, Pike et al. 2007).

In order to precisely understand how the LEADER approach is being practically implemented, Ray (2006, 2000a) has proposed the concept of *neo-endogenous development*. The nuance from the notion of *endogenous development* is that the *neo-endogenous* approach acknowledges various manifestations of the 'extra-local'. *Neo-endogenous* is "a new term […] shorthand to describe endogenous-based development in which extra-local factors are recognised and regarded as essential but which retains a belief in the potential of local areas to shape their future" (Ray 2000a: 4). In other words, the *neo-endogenous* accepts that there is a scope for the exogenous interventions that "inevitably and crucially impact on — and are exploitable by — the local level" (Ray 2006: 281). This is based on the fact that, although *endogenous* is supposed to be the contrary of *exogenous* (High and Nemes 2007, Pike et al. 2007, Garofoli 2002, Ray 2000a, 2000b) they "should not be interpreted as mutually exclusive categories" (Furmankiewicz 2011: 265). As defended by Galdeano-Gómez et al. (2011: 61), "any locality will include a mix of exogenous and endogenous forces, and the local level must interact with the extra-local", the latter also being called "global" by Garofoli (2002) or Ray (2000a, 2000b). Therefore, the neo-endogenous approach to rural development is a hybrid model between *exogenous* and *endogenous* as ideal opposites — that is, a simple dualism — multi-scalar in nature (Gkartzios and Scott 2013, Galdeano-Gómez et al. 2011, Ray 2006). In short, it basically answers 'yes' to the question posed by High and Nemes (2007: 114): "is it [so] that endogenous and exogenous development cannot be reconciled?".

This train of thought tends to relate to the notion of *governance* that, unlike *government,* takes into consideration the role of business and civil society in the exercise of power and, thus, goes beyond the formalities of politics (Stoker 1998). However, Böcher (2008: 372, 377) points out that the concept of *governance* holds "some kind of confusion" or it is "relatively imprecise". Generally speaking, *governance* refers to various parties working together through networks in order to achieve common goals, while *government* reserves itself to traditional forms of public action operated by the apparatuses of the sovereign state (Böcher 2008, Stoker 1998). In this

sense, *governance* is usually conceived as bottom-up, while *government* is defined as hierarchically top-down. However, *governance* is also referred to at times as a multi-scalar or multi-level process, which means that different governmental and non-governmental actors on several tiers are engaged in the dynamics of participative negotiation (Gkartzios and Scott 2013, Romero and Farinós 2011, High and Nemes 2007, Pike et al. 2007, Woods 2005, Marsden 1999). In this respect, Gkartzios and Scott (2013), Romero and Farinós (2011), Böcher (2008), High and Nemes (2007), Ray (2006, 2000a, 2000b) and other scholars have shown how top-down government and bottom-up governance dynamics interact and are combined on the ground, even leading to conflicts.

It is worth mentioning that the *governance* idea is somewhat self-serving as it tends to conceal the role of the public sector, which has been very pleasing to the prevailing neoliberal environment in western countries since the early 1980s (Furmankiewicz et al. 2010, Tonts and Haslam McKenzie 2005, Woods 2005, Ray 2000a, 2000b). In any case, the so-called *territorial governance* is an extended paradigm in geography (Furmankiewicz 2011, Romero and Farinós 2011, Farinós 2008) and allows for the role of *civil society* processes of *development to* be underlined, particularly the *endogenous* ones. "In territorial governance the effect of collective management of resources is an important issue. The enhancement of interactions between local stakeholders is considered as the first condition for a long-term cooperation" (Furmankiewicz 2011: 263).

In conclusion, and as a systematisation of everything stated, *development* can be defined as follows:

"A consensual, democratic definition and search for the common good, including future generations to ensure the value of sustainability and put a restriction on speculative growth. [...] Collective social learning and political processes can lead to legitimate, crafted, generally good decisions. Everything needed to counteract speculative growth linked only to values of economic growth [...]. Hence, it is essential to place sustainability as a starting element linked to deliberative participation." (Sánchez-García 2007: 49).

Methodology

Two data collection methods are adopted for this research: statistical database processing and qualitative information analysis. Firstly, the quantitative approach allows for characterising the situation of the regional context where the two case-studies are located. Initially, we seek to contextualise the further examined specific experiences, that is, to create a general overview of the rural areas in south-eastern Galicia. Secondly, the particular case-studies examination is developed through a qualitative approach which is suitable to understand what people perceive as important from their individual perspective (Eyles and Smith 1988, Taylor and Bogdan 1984).

This dual approach, both qualitative and quantitative, depending on the scale**,** is rooted in their methodological complementarity through triangulation (Bericat 1998). In fact, the procedure of combining macro-geographical statistical indicators with micro-geographical qualitative approaches is quite common in geography, given the weaknesses of quantitative studies at the level of small groups (Bailly 1987). Likewise, Bessière (2012: 23-24) has argued that the analysis of rural areas strictly based on quantitative terms is "too reductive", thus it has to be complemented by a "more qualitative approach" at community scale since the "local enrolment acts as a basic feature in rural societies". In this respect, Marsden (1999: 508) has advocated

in a seminal work on rural geography that "[o]ne important concern is how the trends outlined [i.e. at regional scale] […] manifest themselves locally". In our study, departing from the critical situation of the rural areas of the province of Ourense at regional scale, the performance of two local case-studies in terms of development is investigated. Particular inspiration for this two-fold methodological approach has been obtained from Dax et al. (2013) and Haslam McKenzie (2013).

Qualitative analysis has comprised documentary and interviewing sources. With regard to the first technique, primary sources (association brochures, websites[4)], etc.) and secondary sources (already developed research, newspapers, etc.) have been extensively examined. In relation to interviewing, from 2007 to 2009, several field trips to the case-study areas (hamlets, municipalities and districts) were conducted, including semi-structured interviews with one of the stakeholders in each case in order to obtain their views on the experience. "The emphasis is on considering the meanings people attribute to their life and the processes which operate in particular social contexts" (Valentine 1997: 111). A script with an open set of subjects and questions without any fixed response pattern categories was used for the interviews. The aim was to provide empathic interaction and even detailed feelings and valued judgments from the interviewer (Ruiz-Olabuénaga 2003, Eyles and Smith 1988, Taylor and Bogdan 1984). The information was enriched with fieldtrip visits with students in 2007 and 2008, in which open debates were generated (between students, those in charge of the experience and lecturers), thus complementing the previous ideas. These techniques have improved the *understanding* (rather than the *explanation*) of the development experiences in the hamlets, and thereby systematising:

- The reasons given for the initiative's origin and its permanence.
- Their idea of *development* in each case, related or not to tourism.
- Activities, experiences, results, etc. they consider being the most outstanding.
- The project's relationship with institutionalised development (governments, etc.).
- Territorial links established on different scales.

These are the key themes considered in the analysis. We do not provide systematic dialogue transcripts, except some short sentences, because they were not recorded (one option of qualitative work according to Eyles and Smith 1988). However, we did take down our impressions in a notebook. We must clarify that we did not seek to point out the socio-economic impact, hamlet acceptance or the level of satisfaction from the experiences, issues that deviate away from the purpose of this article. Why *O Viso* and *Portas Abertas*? They were chosen for the implementation of the purposive sampling strategy or "snowball", as explained by Hay (2005) and Ruiz-Olabuénaga (2003). In fact, the qualitative methodology does not attempt a statistical representativeness, but it does try to go deeper into each case (Hay 2005, Ruiz-Olabuénaga 2003, Eyles and Smith 1988, Valentine 1997, Taylor and Bogdan 1984).

4) http://www.cdroviso.org/ and http://www.cdrportasabertas.org/ (Consulted in October 2013).

Results

"Is anybody there?"[5] *The regional setting: the rural areas in the province of Ourense*

In this section, we review some indicators that describe the situation of rural areas in the south-eastern Galicia region, that is, the province of Ourense. Firstly, with regard to demography, it is noteworthy that this province is one of the few of the total of 50 Spanish provinces which exhibits decades of sustained decrease (Goerlich and Mas 2006). Fig. 2 represents the last century's demographic curve. After an historic high in the 1950 Census, the region has been continuously declining and has gone from nearly 470000 to just over 330000 current inhabitants. This trend can be completed with two proportional facts: the province accounted for 1.7% of the Spanish population in 1950 but it remained at 0.7% of the total in 2011, so while Ourense fell Spain rose from 28 to 47 million inhabitants. In the same period, Galicia has stagnated (remaining at 2.7 million), but, with Ourense's decrease, the province went from representing within it a percentage of more than 17% to less than 12%.

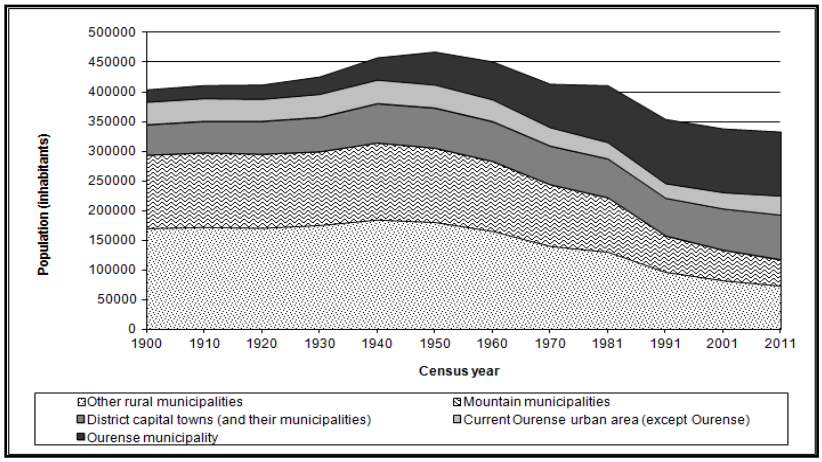

Fig. 2 - **Demographic evolution of the province of Ourense (1900-2011)**
Source: www.ine.es

Fig. 2 also provides relevant geographical information showing what has become of a spatial redistribution of the population. The current rural municipalities (both from the mountainous areas[6] and the other rural areas) represented more than 73% of the provincial population at the beginning of the century, a percentage that was higher considering that the remaining 27% was also largely rural (but we do not have the infra-municipal data). Nonetheless, that 73% decreased to 35% in 2011. In a dynamic turnabout, the municipality of the city of Ourense has increased from 5% to over 32%. The municipalities around the provincial capital, which are now peri-urban areas, but were not at the start of the 20th century[7], have remained stable at 9-10%; throughout the 20th century, these current peri-urban areas behaved as rural, losing population, but in the last few decades they have regained importance through the neighbouring expansion

5) In Galicia there is an expression that has become a symbol for rural depopulation, thanks to the documentary *Queda alguén aí?* ('Is anybody there?') by Rafael Cid (2007).

6) We define as mountainous municipalities those considered as such by Torres et al. (1993).

7) We consider those municipalities defined as part of the urban area of Ourense under the passed *Directrices de Ordenación Territorial* ('Regional Planning Guidelines of Galicia') in 2008 (later revoked); the city of Ourense itself is excluded.

of the city of Ourense. Finally, the district capital towns[8)] show a population increase (from 13 to 23%), to the extent that they have now become small cities acting as focal nodes of rural areas (Rodríguez-González 1999). In short: the province is now urban and its rural areas are practically empty.

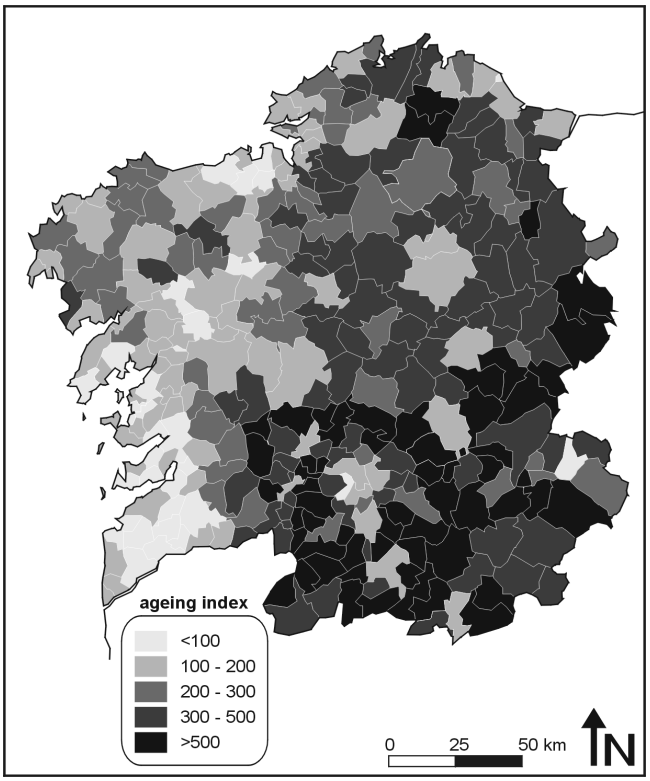

Fig. 3 - **Ageing index by municipalities in Galicia (2011)**
Source: www.ige.eu

Nevertheless, the gap tends to deepen as the ageing in the rural areas of the province has reached exorbitant values. A few years on the horizon, and given that it is unlikely that a mass arrival of migrants occurs, there may be absolute depopulation. In Fig. 3, we can see how ageing (measured by the rate of ageing or the relationship between the young and the old population) affects the entire province, except for 2 municipalities (out of a total of 92), in which there are more younger than older people. Indeed, ageing displays chilling magnitudes in many municipalities. Lobeira and A Teixeira present the highest ageing rates in Galicia, with 461 elderly for every 16 youngsters and toddlers in the first, 224 for every 20 in the second. Such alarming rates can only lead to the mid-term demographic extinction of those municipalities (López-González 2004).

8) We include the municipalities of the regional cities in accordance with the 2008 Regional Planning Guidelines, although we detract 5 municipalities as we consider them completely rural.

In any case, the rural crisis in the province of Ourense cannot be reduced to demographic issues. By means of an indicator that we have developed (the number of companies per km^2) it is clear that economic activity in most of the south-eastern Galicia region is at its lowest ebb, with less than one company per km^2 (Fig. 4). In most of the province of Ourense, there is, as a rule, less than 100 economic activities in each municipality. This figure — considering that this also includes the self-employed people — shows the almost absolute economic stagnation found in these areas.

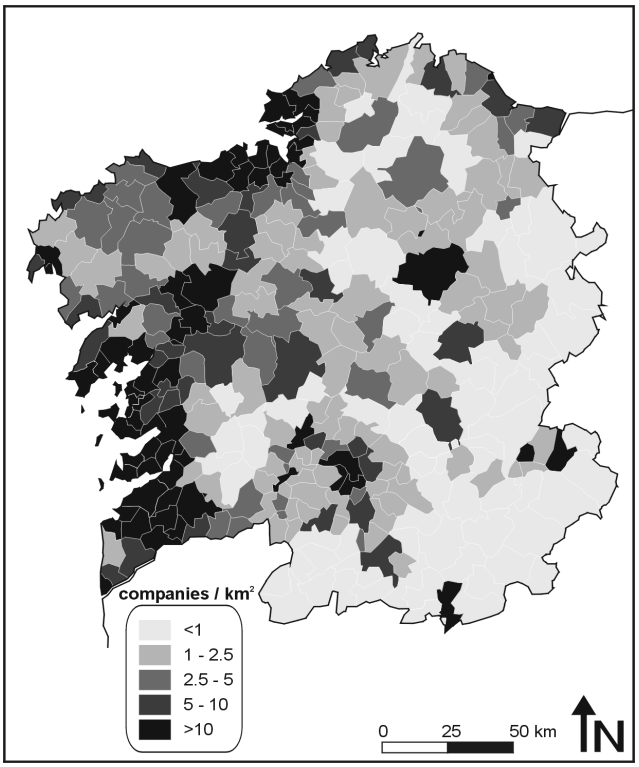

Fig. 4 - **Density of economic activities by municipalities in Galicia (2011)**
Source: www.ige.eu

In particular regard to the economy of farming, which is the traditional breadwinner in rural areas, the municipalities of Ourense again show ailing values. As noted by Majoral (1997), it makes more sense in the analysis of farms to consider the economic or employment dimensions than that of physical (area of land per farm). Workforce data is a good indicator of the health of agriculture as this allows for actual work being carried out in farms by means of units so-called yearly work units or YWU (Molinero et al. 2004, Majoral 1997). In Galicia, and as it can be seen in Fig. 5, Ourense is the province with less YWUs (14% of total). The province of Lugo, in contrast, has 34% of the Galician YWUs, despite having a similar population to Ourense (333.257 inhabitants in the province of Ourense and 351.530 inhabitants in Lugo, in 2011). This fact leads us to infer that agriculture in south-eastern Galicia has been scaled down and kept at a low, in a marginal or subsistence situation. Many rural municipalities in other Galician provinces have a high rate of ageing (Fig. 3), but, at the same time, a high concentration of YWUs (Fig. 5), whereas agricultural inactivity is an added headache to the

extreme ageing problem in the province of Ourense. This fact implies a critical situation for both demographics and for the traditional rural economy in this region.

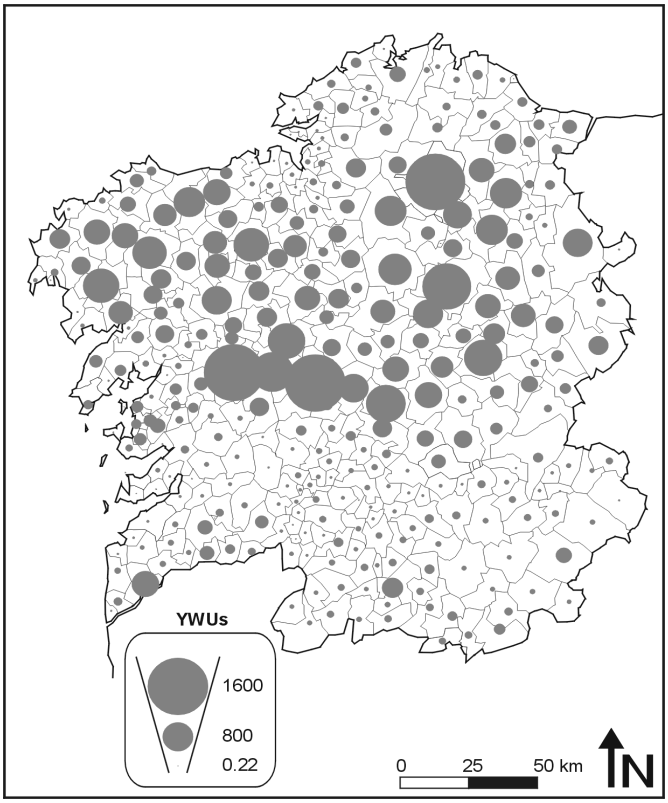

Fig. 5 - **Agricultural workforce by municipalities in Galicia (2009)**
Source: www.ine.es

Given these conditions in agriculture, tourism is always treated as the alternative sector to the crisis in the agrarian economy (Santos 2012, Santos and Paül 2011, Lois and Santos 2004). Once again, we see how weak the introduction of economic activity, tourism in this case, is in the rural municipalities of the province of Ourense (Fig. 6). Only 85 of the 592 rural tourism accommodation businesses in Galicia are in the province of Ourense while in the province of Lugo, with practically the same population as the former, there are 156. Thus, the tourism as an "alternative" for rural and regional development is extremely feeble in the province of Ourense. At the same time, the complementarity between agriculture and rural tourism in the form of farm tourism or agritourism (rural tourism accommodation businesses type C in Galician regulation) is almost nonexistent in Ourense. In fact, there are only 2 type C-businesses, unlike other areas of Galicia, where this rural tourism type is dominant (Fig. 6).

In short, rural areas in the province of Ourense present a frail and declining demography, with extreme ageing putting them at risk of extinction. Economic activities are meagre in both farming (which is marginal) and tourism; neither really seems to offer an alternative to regional

economic decline. In the apparent lost hope for rural areas in this province, there lie two divergent cases that we will examine in the following sections.

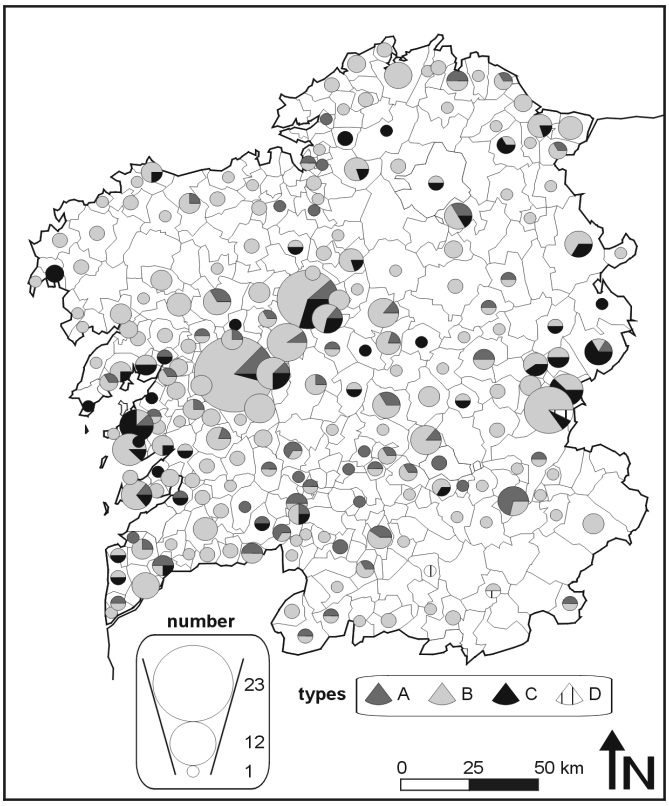

Fig. 6 - **Rural tourism accommodation businesses by municipalities in Galicia (2013)**
Source: www.turgalicia.es

O Viso *Rural Development Centre*

O Viso's origin lies in a previous association that was created in 1985 with the aim of activating the parish of Lodoselo. Through the rehabilitation and reuse of a number of abandoned components and buildings, which were mainly in disuse due to emigration (the community oven, the community wash house, an abandoned forge, a closed school, etc.), they report that they attempted to give new life to a common heritage and, in this way, place value on the hamlet's own culture, identity and self-esteem. The initiative was not only limited to the restoration and reuse of real estate, but also extended to the reintroduction of festivals like the *Magosto* (All Saints' Eve) or *Entroido* (Carnival) — collective celebrations that had been lost over time. This was all done through contact with the local community and recovery of the traditional ways of doing things. In 1990, the association decided to become an NGO and set more ambitious targets, developing its own rural development programme: joining diverse initiatives, becoming a space for dialogue and collaboration, promoting culture and information and so on. It should be noted that *O Viso* contributed to the founding of COCEDER

(*Confederación de centros de desarrollo rural*, 'Confederation of Rural Development Centres' in Spain) which, given its scope, receives funds from the Spanish Ministry for Social Affairs through participation in the consignment of 0.52% of income tax[9)]. *O Viso* currently counts on 200 members or so.

In 1993 began (and continues to date) the *Pobo Escola* ('People School') programme, which is very popular in the district of A Limia and even in the province of Ourense. This activity requires that the elderly people of Lodoselo teach local schoolchildren, or from further afield, different rural cultural elements: trades (leather, linen weaving, basketry, charcoal, etc.), bread making (making bread in the community oven then taking it home), organic gardening and so on. They do not aim to develop conventional workshops, but living museums in which the protagonists are the residents. Through their own feelings and words, the elderly explain countryside activities and create an intergenerational communication channel. For the hamlet, *Pobo Escola* is a mechanism to dignify its very nature. Even though some people from Lodoselo had been reluctant about *O Viso* activities at the beginning, the *Pobo Escola* programme has brought many older people on board and these people have even loaned materials, tools and so on from their homes. The initial idea from *O Viso* lies in the fact that there is already a Lodoselo culture, a rural culture of its own and that "there is no need to invent anything" but just expand on inherited identity, become aware, take pride in it and evolve it from there and go incorporating modern elements.

O Viso restored the ruins and now manages the Lodoselo rectory, which was loaned, courtesy of the Diocese of Ourense, for 25 years. As a result, a hostel has been set up in the rectory that can accommodate between 15 to 40 people and accepts groups who want to stay and use the facilities (kitchen, rooms, etc.) as well as those who want to follow activities in the *Pobo Escola* programme or even accept others, including those on hiking, biking routes and so on for several days. The hostel's guest profile is very ample, from schools and youth groups to bachelor parties, social education students or groups of foreigners who want to enjoy the Lodoselo experience. Being an NGO, reasonable prices are charged and since no profit is sought, proceeds go towards the maintenance of other O *Viso* activities.

Started in 1994 as the product of an agreement between *O Viso* and the Municipal Council of Xinzo, the Youth Information Centre (*Centro de Información Xuvenil*, CIX) in Xinzo (district capital city of A Limia; Fig. 1) was created. The centre's basic objective is not only to satisfy the cultural concerns of the district's youth, but also to form a network of volunteers (with branches abroad), to offer a youth job bank, to contribute to youth entrepreneurship and give information on sexuality and drugs. All this information reaches the public through a small newspaper that has become popular in the region. From CIX Xinzo, they also manage a leisure time programme in Lodoselo with a wide range of courses (monitors, environmental education, theatre, sexuality and so on).

Not only do they seek to serve the youth but also older people in Lodoselo and the surrounding area. For this purpose, a community soup kitchen was installed in the rectory building in the late 1990s, where about 40 people lunch accompanied each day. The *O Viso* elderly are offered laundry and ironing services, transportation to the health centre, the purchase of medicines, and so on, all paid depending on each person's pension. *O Viso* pioneered the offer of these services in rural Ourense although some municipal councils have since followed suit.

9) The income tax in Spain is so-called IRPF (*Impuesto sobre la renta de las personas físicas*, 'Personal Income Tax'). If the contributor agrees, the government destines 0.52% of their income to the Catholic Church or to social purposes (NGOs). Given that COCEDER is Spanish-wide established, it is a potential receiver of such funds, together with other NGOs.

The resources for this type of activity, called *A túa outra casa* ('Your Other Home'), come from end user contributions, from O *Viso* funds and agreements with institutions. The most ambitious *A túa casa* activity has been the opening of supervised community housing in 2002, in part made possible by the European LEADER programme, which granted funds for the construction of the building. Applying the same philosophy as the soup kitchen, each person is charged depending on their capabilities to pay. The objective of community housing for elderly people, who wish to and are in a delicate situation, is that they can move in and live there, with the confessed will to "guarantee the right to die where one had lived" — i.e. to remain in the hamlet in old age. With so many actions taken, it should be noted that *O Viso* became the largest net employer in the municipality of Sarreaus without being a business[10]. While acting for elderly people, the position of therapist who travels to homes and who began to work in Lodoselo and the surrounding areas must be highlighted and this service now covers the whole of the district of A Limia. It is relevant to point out that the work of this person is financed by a non-profit foundation from the private sector, which goes towards alleviating dependence on the authorities and diversifies resource sources.

O Viso has a clear commitment to promoting the development of agriculture in the region. In this sense, it constantly collaborates with organic farming activities (with a cooperative, for example), which has brought a gardening activity to *Pobo Escola* and has used the country's grain (corn and rye) to make bread. In the same way, and based on the maxim expressing "if you stop, you die", mid-term work with livestock is being devised. In particular, the local type of cow in A Limia is being reintroduced into the surrounding hills of Lodoselo in order to avoid losing the breed and to minimise the risk of forest fires.

Porta Abertas *Rural Development Centre*

Portas Abertas (literally meaning 'Open Doors') started in 1990 after the concerns from the clergy in the area. They wanted to help the people in the district of Val de Monterrei to be able to stay in their place of origin and avoid their emigration. From the beginning they joined COCEDER which allows, as in the case of *O Viso*, access to Spanish governmental funds. An association was then formed (currently there are over 200 members) and it is legally recognised as a non-profit organisation with the aim of persuading people in the rural area to get involved in cooperation and voluntarism. They aim to undertake joint actions and support the promotion of disadvantaged social groups. The elderly represent a priority line of action as work is carried out to neutralise the cases of loneliness and the need to place the elderly in care homes. People always being isolated in their homes is reported as a danger and so *Portas Abertas* aims to forge social links and break this isolation. The declared purpose of the various actions is to "make a community" that the residents feel proud of being part of it and its traditions. Various activities are organised (cinema, looms, selective collections, etc.). Some of them are striking — as in the case of makeup workshops for the elderly, with very positive effects on individual self-esteem quoted. It also works with children in the municipality of Vilardevós by organising afternoons so youngsters can be together after school, they can interact with each other and not lock themselves away in their houses.

Surely the most visible action taken in the 1990s was the rehabilitation and re-use of rural schools that had previously been closed down. One of them became the headquarters of *Portas Abertas* in Arzádegos. Another one has become a rural hostel (Vilarello da Cota), where activities and accommodation (with kitchen, bathroom, heating, etc.) are managed in the 24-bed hostel. Since it does not meet any of the 4 legal categories of rural tourism

10) Information supplied by the Mayor of Sarreaus (December 2008), in a telephone conversation.

accommodation businesses (Fig. 6), it works as place for social and cultural activities of various kinds, in which one may complementarily stay the night. To sign up, a programme of activities with *Portas Abertas* must be agreed: hiking, environmentally-themed workshops and so on. This hostel mainly welcomes groups of friends.

Portas Abertas left Arzádegos in October 2007, the hamlet where it was founded, and moved to Vilardevós, the village where the municipality has its capital. The reason was the willingness to take over the management of the Smugglers' Interpretation Centre, which was built with funds from the EU INTERREG programme and which was designed as a tourist attraction[11)], as the Municipal Council of Vilardevós was not able to manage it due to a lack of funds for its maintenance. Thus, an agreement was reached between *Portas Abertas* and the Municipal Council for the association to be responsible for its daily management and to keep it open. In return, they were able to use the building as their headquarters. The Interpretation Centre has counted on some tourist infrastructure (promotional video, panels, etc.), but *Portas Abertas* has wanted to give it a coherent project, as well as keep it alive and make it a meeting place for the locals. According to the Mayor of Vilardevós, it was in danger of becoming a "dead centre" and, by way of an agreement with *Portas Abertas*, it was placed in the hands of citizens[12)].

Portas Abertas has worked for almost the whole district from the beginning. In conjunction with the Federation of Rural Women (*Federación de Mulleres Rurais*) of Ourense, a computer classroom was opened in 2003 in Verín (district capital city of Val de Monterrei; Fig. 1). Here, young computer experts teach computer skills to the elderly, as well as other groups, such as the disabled and immigrants. One building has also been restored in Verín and it is used as a social and family meeting centre for youngsters in dysfunctional families. The resources are obtained not just through participation in the 0.52% income tax fund, but also through agreements with public and private institutions (especially savings banks and foundations). Having said that much of the project is based on volunteer work and some actions are supported by government funds. For example, a programme to favour the integration of children from immigrant families (especially Romanian and Portuguese) was supported by the Galician government, a private foundation and a bank. *Portas Abertas* also participated in LEADER I (1991-93) and II (1994-99). In the first case, it directly managed funds and in the second it worked within the association that was established for this purpose. They prefer to raise funds from private sector than from public sector because there are fewer problems in its management. In any event, they stress their political independence from any party in power and they refuse to be linked to any party. The idea of *Portas Abertas* is to ask for funds when they have ideas, and not vice versa.

Their commitment to the primary sector stands out because they understand that tourism (hostel in Vilarello da Cota, Smugglers' Interpretation Centre in Vilardevós, etc.) has to be a complementary activity in rural areas. In their valuation of the farming sector, they have opted for chestnut growing on terraces by creating a company (helped by EU funds); they have

11) Within the framework of INTERREG III (2000-2006), it was decided to create a Smuggler's Interpretation Centre in Vilardevós, given the trans-boundary black marketer tradition in the area. It is a typical European funds "investment": costly restoration of an old building and the creation of an exhibition, based on information boards with the intention of placing it at the service of tourism, but without an operational project that can attract demand or proper insertion in the regional tourism system. This type of initiative leads to failure, commonly to closure and abandonment of the infrastructure.

12) *La Región* 11.10.2007.

developed a proposal for the extension of Monterrei PDO[13)] so that it covers the municipality of Vilardevós[14)]; they have conducted agricultural training courses on topics like cadastre or food/ wine tasting, all funded by the Galician Ministry for Rural Affairs; they have worked with the Provincial Council for the reintroduction of olive grove picking (1.600 trees in two communal forests) and, in parallel, there has been the creation of an exhibition and olive oil in the Smugglers' Interpretation Centre[15)].

Discussion

The two studied experiences respond to the concept of *development* identified by Ojeda (2002, 2003, 2004) or Markantoni et al. (2012). Indeed, they are based on elements such as the pursuit of self-esteem, the maintenance of identity or respect for inherited traditional knowledge and heritage. In terms of self-esteem, the intended and conscious use of the Galician language in the two case studies is highly revealing. In both cases, it was claimed that rural development is impossible if the language of Galicia is foregone — in fact, one of the association's most active members is not a native speaker, but has wholeheartedly adopted the language. In the same way, the spoken pride of living in the countryside should be stressed, and the desire to continue in that same vein, as is noted in the slogan of *Portas Abertas*: "Rural, naturally!"®. In an almost ceremonial way, both initiatives started through a rehabilitation phase of unused material elements (the abandoned rectory, collective oven, closed-down schools, etc.). Nevertheless, these actions have transcended the tangible dimension in such a way that they have helped people to (re)identify with their local area and have somehow become symbols for rural life by showing that tradition and history do not belong only to the past but also to the present and future, in line with the "culture economies" of Ray (2000a) when theorising on endogenous development.

Moreover, the two initiatives advocate a particular direction of rural development with regard to the ongoing discussion on the role of agriculture. From our previous analysis, we can deduce that the primary sector is placed at the centre of proposals: chestnuts, olives, or vineyards in *Portas Abertas*; organic farming, livestock or native cereal grain in *O Viso*. This choice is consistent with Lois' (2004) or Banks and Marsden's (2000) academic propositions in this respect. It is, in any case, about agriculture not being seen as productivism, but as logic of what Ilbery and Bowler (1998) have called "post-productivism" or Wilson (2007) "no-productivism". As a protagonist from Lodoselo commented, "The countryside cannot live without farmers and breeders; the rest will come later and not the other way round, as is being done". This interviewee's quote is as forceful as the academic declaration from van der Ploeg et al. (2000: 401) that "we reject the notion that rural development can only proceed through the 'expropriation' of agriculture". Furthermore, the interpretation of these experiences suggests that both have worked on *sustainability* without referring to it that way: the social dimension is pivotal (care of the elderly, women, children, youth, immigrants, etc.); ecological and environmental issues are very present and, as has just been said in regard to agriculture, so is the work on the economic aspects. There is not, therefore, confusion between *sustainable*

13) PDO (protected designation of origin) is a regional product recognised by the EU. In the case of Monterrei, wine. To attain this labelling, the product must be distinctive and has either regional or local names. The designation is initiated at the regional or national scale and culminates in the EU official recognition. For PDO commodities, production, processing and preparation must take place in a given region.

14) The proposal was sent by the Monterrei PDO to the Galician Ministry for Rural Affairs in 2008 (*La Región* 02.07.2008) and in July 2009 the extension was officially passed.

15) It has been called the "Museum of the Olive Tree", EU-funded INTERREG III (*La Región* 21.12.2008).

development and *economic growth*, as Mikkelson (2013), Capalbo (2008), Naredo (2007), Sánchez-García (2007), Vázquez-Barquero (2007), Anton and Gonzàlez-Reverté (2005) or other authors warn.

We have already indicated how government policy on rural development has tended to rely on tourism as a future activity in Galicia (Santos 2012, Santos and Paül 2011, Lois and Santos 2004), in line with widespread EU policy recommendations and practices (Böcher 2008, Woods 2005, Ray 2000a). Instead, the studied associations understand that the core elements to rural development are the environment, the socio-cultural dimension and, in terms of economy, the farming sector; tourism, in their "worldview" stance, is merely a complement. In fact, the "tourism" opted for in both experiences is not institutionalised. Fig. 6 show only one officially recognised business as accommodation for rural tourism in both municipalities (in Sarreaus, and it is not *O Viso* hostel). What we realise from the start is how weak the local tourist economy is in the area. Indeed, our case studies have created two separate hostels which, as they explain, have made an important local impact and have established synergies with the respective communities. Nonetheless, they find themselves on the margins of "official rural tourism" that is recognised administratively — hence their invisibility in Fig. 6. In this sense, it is doubtful that these particular rural localities can be interpreted under the "shift from production to consumption" paradigm proposed by authors such as Scott et al. (2011), Woods (2005), Ray (2000a) or Marsden (1999).

As reported in the previous section, both initiatives have taken partial advantage of available public resources — for example, they have used the 0.52% for NGOs from income tax, and they have participated, in a direct or an indirect way, in the LEADER and INTERREG programmes. This is worth discussing in terms of the debates between *endogenous* and *neo-endogenous development* conceptions (Galdeano-Gómez et al. 2011, High and Nemes 2007, Ray 2006, 2000a). In these experiences their own projects and the rural community's shared visions are more relevant than the arrival of external financial funds from rural development policies. This attitude links with the notions of *endogenous development* advocated by Vázquez-Barquero (2006, 2007, 2009) or *spontaneous development* by Lois and Santos (2004). Furthermore, both case-studies do not follow Ray's (2000a: 4, 2006: 281) acknowledgements that in *neo-endogenous* development the extra-local factors are "essential", "inevitable" or "crucial". We can claim, in this respect, that "We […] focus on rural development *practices*, rather than rural development *policies* as is currently the case in most sociological analysis. Without wanting to detract from the relevance of the latter, we must be aware that […] the *practical* is not triggered by the *political*" (van der Ploeg et al. 2000: 396).

Indeed, the reception of generous EU funds for institutionalised rural development, type LEADER, is negatively perceived by the participants in both initiatives, which leads us to assess the *neo-endogenous* approach as quite inconsistent with interviewees' beliefs and values. Moreover, the socio-economic indicators of a net receiving region have remained moribund for more than 20 years of rural development policy, as sharply shown in section 4.1. This makes the policies and the theoretical underpinnings that sustain these policies rather vacuous. With regard to the implementation of the EU funds, this article reports a specific example of investment that, were it not taken by one of the associations studied in 2007, was to become one more closed-down building constructed or restored with EU programs that scatter the Galician countryside. This reality is also evidenced by the observations of Lois (2004) or Trabada (2007). In this sense, this article leads us to infer that the *neo-endogenous development* model, as repeatedly formulated, carries no actual *development* at all on the ground. We agree with Ray (2000a: 110) when he says that "the system, emerging from the logic of neo-endogenous development, may contain a tendency to produce [a] hierarchical

structure and thereby possibly denying the benefits of the neo-endogenous approach to many rural areas".

From the experiences analysed, we deduce that civil society plays a major role in the activation of rural areas, beyond the usual emphasis placed on the public sector or business activities, just as the endogenous development theory claims (Pike et al. 2007, Vázquez-Barquero 2007). Therefore, our article highlights the need to not confine academic research on rural development to governments and businesses. In fact, initiatives that transcend formal institutions have become particularly relevant in the current climate, given the stifling degree of government paralysis and debt, or the inability of many companies to continue their activities and adapt to a new competitive environment. "The solution to the crisis depends on the use of the potential for development and the actions that come from civil society, inasmuch as development processes that occur as a result of using own resources through projects designed and managed by citizens and local organisations" (Vázquez-Barquero 2009: 13). The two initiatives have been able to withstand more than 20 years, including 5 in crisis, in a regional environment as hard hit as the province of Ourense.

It remains doubtful to what extent the two analysed experiences contribute towards real development. By assessing through the submitted theory and the methodological considerations, the answer must be qualitative. From a strictly quantitative point of view, the critical state of the directly involved parishes[16)] does not substantially differ from the regional situation. Nevertheless, we must not lose sight of the fact that it has generated economic activity (in the municipality of Sarreaus, *O Viso* has been recognised as a main activity employer) and that there are young people working in rural areas, although the results are not statistically representative. In any case, and albeit that we refer to non-profit making NGOs or associations, they do help to appoint (and even attract) a particular workforce that they would not otherwise have, or would see emigrate. Nonetheless, we should stress the relevance of qualitative readings following Bessière's (2012) indications in this respect, thus taking into consideration the perceptions on the activation of lost traditions or the development of social services. Indeed, cultural vitality or quality of life are difficult to measure (Bailly 1987), although it has been widely reported that Lodoselo or Arzádegos have improved over the last two decades — something that has been possible thanks to the studied initiatives (not down to action from the municipal councils or the regional government). We refer to *development,* not *growth*, which requires us to work with different frameworks and this is in line with recent theoretical proposals such as Jackson (2009), Taibo (2009) and Latouche (2007), who criticise a *de facto* line of thought in social sciences that is too narrow-mindedly obsessed with *economic growth.*

Given that governance has been interpreted as a multi-level process (Gkartzios and Scott 2013, Romero and Farinós 2011, High and Nemes 2007, Pike et al. 2007, Woods 2005, Marsden 1999), it is necessary to understand how the two initiatives act in terms of geographical scales:

- Both development centres have "jumped" from their respective hamlets and parishes to the district arena. This is important because they express that a rural development project must have a broad and not narrow scope, i.e. to be able to be easily exported beyond the place of origin.

16) For the parish level, there are only recent demographic databases, but the trend is clearly negative. Arzádegos had 756 inhabitants in 1981; the population has decreased to 344 in 2001 and to 256 in 2011. In the case of the parish of Lodoselo, the figures are also evidently depressing: 477 (1981), 238 (2001) and 194 (2011).

- An active presence in the district capital small cities (Xinzo, Verín). This is a "stance" that uses these towns to reach the whole district. For example, capture an audience that later heads to Lodoselo or Arzádegos to develop activities. Thus, Xinzo and Verín become "loudspeakers" for the small rural parishes, without sacrificing the latter, and placing them in the district in a way that they would hardly be able to do so alone.
- The connection to other levels: in the province of Ourense, in Galicia, in Spain. Membership to COCEDER not only ensures a joint effort, but it is also a *lobby* to put pressure on a Spanish scale. There are even links with the EU through funded projects and, as we have already discussed, they are very different to the common use of LEADER or INTERREG funds in Galicia.

From these dynamics, we can see cooperation networks on different scales and with different stakeholders, both public (governments, councils, universities, etc.) and private (social work, foundations, etc.), and both horizontal and vertical in the senses given by Böcher (2008). Our inference in this sense is that *endogenous rural development* should not be strictly understood as encapsulated in the registration of a hamlet or a parish (a specific locality), as several scholars assume when theorising on endogeneity (Galdeano-Gómez et al. 2011, High and Nemes 2007, Ray 2006, 2000a, 2000b), but open and weaving a dense web of complicities, which in any case means losing local control. *O Viso* or *Portas Abertas* strictly follow the logic of *bottom-up* since they set their agenda and then agree on other levels of partnership with other stakeholders for its implementation. Through these partnerships, we do not find a rejection of public actions but a proactive initiative that seeks to work with them, when it is necessary or possible. It is a way of working which contrasts with the widely established "subsidised attitude" in the European rural areas and it was favoured by the generalisation of EU funds (Barthe and Milian 2011: 157-158).

The LEADER programme has been rhetorically presented as pro-governance given that it has been conceived as bottom-up. However, this aspiration is more an alleged political construction than a reality, as shown by Böcher (2008), Furmankiewicz *et al*. (2010), Furmankiewicz (2011) or Dax et al. (2013) when analysing particular cases across Europe and demonstrating that the top-down direction is determinant. Nevertheless, the experiences reported here are truly bottom-up and, critically, they only take partial advantage of LEADER and other EU schemes. As expressed by Dax et al. (2013: 9), "it is necessary […] to counter-balance this tendency [towards bureaucratic, top-down and non-innovative rural development projects across the EU] and to make efforts to re-establish the preconditions for local community action".

Conclusion

Despite the pessimism to be found in Galician rural areas, particularly gloomy in the province of Ourense regional context, this article suggests that there are hopes for the future. The two studied initiatives confront resignation and despair detected by Lois (2004) or Trabada (2007) in their overall approaches for the whole of the Galician countryside. Similar case-studies should be examined with the same methodology and theoretical framework proposed here in order to test if there are more hopes beyond the two apparently exceptional case-studies analysed. Be that as it may, this paper has shown that at least two rural communities have a very clear idea of what vision — what future — they wish for, following Scott et al.'s (2011) appeal to research into local communities' aspirations.

17) This famous "Mr Average" caricature by Philo (1992) has been enormously discussed in rural geography and indeed has been seminal for further research (the so-called "neglected rural geographies"). For a recent (re)consideration, see Halfacree (2007).

In British rural geography, it has been very popular to consider the "Mr Average" veneer (Philo 1992: 200)[17], by which rural studies are usually based on statistical averages and thus minimising the nuances and the diversity (Halfacree 2007). Perhaps for this reason, the Galician rural geography has not been able to perceive and understand realities that are able to escape the prevailing socio-economic lethargy being experienced by the Galician countryside. As stated by a participant in one of the experiences, it is necessary to "maintain the capacity to dream when this ability is being lost or it has already been lost in countryside. There lies a huge crisis of utopia".

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MATERIAL IMPACTS OF HIP-HOP ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN DAKAR: THE CASE OF *EAUX SECOURS*

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Abstract: The creative city has emerged as a driving force in urban studies in both academic and urban planning realms. Increasingly, scholars are interrogating these ideas of the creative city and the creative class as to their political implications and applications to cities around the world. This paper focuses on the role of the artist in urban development through the case study of one hip-hop group from the Pikine neighborhood of Dakar. Pikine, a poor neighborhood on the outskirts of the city, is one of many neighborhoods prone to seasonal flooding. Where city government programs of flood alleviation failed to produce positive results, the hip-hop artists have succeeded to organize and work against flooding. The artists imagined a better urban future from the point of view of disadvantaged neighborhoods, and organized the community to make real, material impacts on the city.

Key Words: *Dakar, hip-hop, creative city, seasonal flooding*.

Introduction

The creative class has emerged as an important driver of urban and regional development around the world, but scholars continue to debate the roles and outcomes of these creative endeavors. Richard Florida brought the idea of creative cities and the creative class into the forefront in his work focused on the changing economic geographies of cities (Florida 2004, 2010, 2012, Florida et al. 2008). In these works, Florida argued that the creative class — the segment of the population whose livelihood depend on personal creativity as part of the knowledge and information based economy — tends to cluster in specific areas, and that these clustering groups positively impact regional development and urban economic growth (Boschma and Fritsch 2009, Storper and Scott 2009, Booyens 2012). Increasingly, cities in the United States and Europe actively promote “creative placemaking” through public programs, private initiatives, and stakeholder participation (Markusen and Gadwa 2010). Some scholars argue that these creative city developments are merely a different repackaging of neoliberal economic models of urban growth and do not represent a substantial shift in development (Peck 2005, Krätke 2010). Moreover, in the creative cities literature the political power of artists themselves are often unfairly reduced to consumption and purchasing power (Markusen 2006).

More broadly, a shift to focus on the creative class assumes a shift of power dynamics in urban development from state-centered authority to a more mosaic amalgam of power comprised of the state, private interests, public participation, personal preferences, non-governmental interest groups, and increasingly connections across the globe (Light and Young 2010). How these power dynamics align and manifest in different regions of the world, and the corresponding role of the creative class, remains an important area of research. How power dynamics and the creative class affects urban redevelopment in cities that do not share the Fordist histories of American and European cities is an important emerging theme in scholarship (Visser 2013). Evidence from post-socialist cities suggests that government-led changes in the urban cultural landscape have not been enough to transform particular places, and the socialist legacy lingers in liminal and forgotten spaces around the city (Light and Young

2010). Also, post-socialist cities have experienced inner-city redevelopment that is often associated with the creative class in the United States, but in Central and East Europe theses redevelopments have been driven by liberalization of the housing markets and local government policies (Kovács et al. 2013). In cities in the developing world, the role of the creative class and cultural industries are often overlooked in favor of scholarship focused on urban developmentalist problems and paradigms (Myers 2005).

In this paper, I focus on the role of cultural industries and the creative class in cities in Africa through a case study of a hip-hop group from Dakar, Senegal — *Eaux Secours* — and their campaign to prevent local flooding in precarious neighborhoods in Dakar. The paper will first examine hip-hop in Dakar in particular as an example of a creative class and cultural industry. Next, I will present an overview of the controversial *Plan Jaxay*, an urban redevelopment program to prevent seasonal flooding in Dakar. I then present a case-study on the response of *Eaux Secours* to *Plan Jaxay*, and highlight the contribution of artists in responding to urban problems. Finally, I will outline how the case from Dakar, Senegal helps shed light on a different kind of creative class emerging in cities around the world.

Materials and Methods

This study uses qualitative methods of observation, interviews, and content analysis to explore the contribution of artists in urban development in Dakar. Observations and interviews took place in the Pikine neighborhood of Dakar in May 2013. The particular hip-hop group *Eaux Secours* came to my attention through their participation in the Dakar youth hip-hop movement (detailed below). I interviewed the three primary group members, and also went on a neighborhood walking tour with the group to affected areas. Walking and pedestrian geographies with research participants has emerged within cultural geography studies as a useful methodology with which to gain insight into how people understand their physical and social geographic landscapes (Anderson 2004). In these walking and talking tours, much of the data that underpins this study was collected. Pictures were taken along the tour, as well as field notes, and detailed notes were then written once the tour came to an end. Songs and music videos from *Eaux Secours* are the data for the content analysis. Most songs are performed in Wolof, a principal language in Senegal, and selected bits were translated for the author into French. Music videos are available on YouTube, and are also in the Wolof language. Social networking sites, especially Facebook, are also important platforms for *Eaux Secours*, and are thus used as data points in this study. Information on the *Plan Jaxaay* was collected from national and international news sources, as well as student projects from Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar.

Results and Discussion

Before presenting the case study of hip-hop and neighborhood flooding, a more detailed context of both Dakar and the role of hip-hop in Dakar urban social movements will be presented.

The Setting: Dakar, Senegal

Dakar is home to nearly one in every five people in Senegal (World Factbook 2013), and one of the premier cosmopolitan urban centers on the continent of Africa. In 2009, the population of Dakar was estimated to be nearly three million people, with approximately 60% of the three million inhabitants under the age of 25 (World Factbook 2013). Urban centers in Senegal are growing at a faster rate than rural areas as people leave the countryside in search of better opportunities in cities (UN 2013). Though ranked 154 (out of 178) on the United Nation's

Human Development Index (UN 2013), Senegal has experienced political stability with no successful *coup d'états* since independence from France in 1960 (Resnick 2013). In 2005, the United Nations estimated that gross national income per person was just over $1600 (World Factbook 2013), with increasing rates of income inequality. Water and electricity infrastructure coverage rates in Dakar are estimated to be near 90% (World Factbook 2013), but access to these networked services proves to be more difficult in certain zones.

Plan Jaxaay

Many neighborhoods in Dakar experience seasonal low-level flooding associated with the rainy season, lasting from about June to September in a normal year. It is common for roads to become impassible because of water levels as rains make the already challenging system of unpaved roads more precarious. The densely populated, and often unplanned, neighborhoods on the outside of central Dakar are particularly prone to seasonal flooding (Douglas et al. 2008). Pikine is one such neighborhood. The Pikine neighborhood was settled in the early 1950s as part of the urban restructuring of Dakar that involved displacing dense neighborhoods in the city center to peripheral locations (Diop 2010). Parts of the vast neighborhood are planned, but an influx of rural populations seeking refuge from drought conditions in the 1970s settled in the neighborhood in unplanned settlements. Many of these unplanned settlements occupied what were at the time dry ephemeral drainage channels (Tschakert et al. 2010). When rain patterns increased, these drainage channels became areas prone to flooding, both because of their natural physical geographic context and the changes in land surface conditions brought on by settlement. Moreover, the water table remained high in Pikine, though on the surface it is undetectable (Diop 2013).

Heavy rains in 2005 brought the problem of seasonal flooding in Dakar into the forefront, as neighborhoods around the city were inundated with both storm water runoff and household wastewater (IRIN 2006). At the peak of the crises, twenty thousand people were displaced from their homes and forced to find shelter with families, friends, and on city streets (IRIN 2006). Photographs of devastated neighborhoods and houses building water barriers out of trash were all over international press (IRIN 2006). In these flooded neighborhoods, the population suffered from increased rates of malaria, gastrointestinal illness, and even cholera.

In response, then President Wade and his urban planning agency developed the *Plan Jaxaay*. The *Plan Jaxaay*, which in the Wolof language means *Bird Flies Higher Plan* (IRIN 2006), relied on two central features: relocating populations from flood-prone areas and channeling storm water into catchment basins within neighborhoods themselves. The relocation programs were voluntary programs and involved populations moving from inundated neighborhoods to state-built planned developments an hour outside of Dakar (Koenig 2011). The new planned neighborhoods under the *Plan Jaxaay* have uniform, 2 to 3 bedroom houses which the government subsidized and then make available at reduced cost, provided the household agrees to 20-year loan agreements (IRIN 2006). Some displacements have occurred in Pikine, but many households are reticent to leave because of the far distance of the new communities and the lack of trust that they will indeed get what they have been promised (Nettali 2008). Some residents of the new communities also report irregularities in electricity and other urban services (Nettali 2008).

Catchment basins have been constructed in five neighborhoods across Dakar in attempts to alleviate the complete inundation of neighborhoods during the rainy season (Diop 2010). In Pikine, one such basin was constructed in 2007 (Diop 2010). First, households occupying the land in which the basin was planned were evacuated, and channels were constructed along

secondary and tertiary roads to divert water into the basin. A pump was installed at the basin, and water was to be pumped out via a complex network of pipes either into rural peripheral lake systems or diverted into coastal Atlantic delta locations. The catchment basin plan worked as planned, and alleviated some of the worst flooding, but was a temporary solution to a persistent problem (IRIN 2006). The basin size was not adequate to catch even the majority of run-off, and the intermittent pumping of water to further locations exacerbated the basin capacity problems. Residents reported a complete stop in water pumping, which means the basin has become a permanent feature in the neighborhood (Fig. 1). Officially, the Plan Jaxaay has ended its first planned phase, and neighborhoods like Pikine are waiting to see what manifests as future projects. As of now, little discussion has taken place, and neighborhoods are left to deal with the consequences of an urban development experiment.

Dangers of the basin have proven to be just as formidable as dangers posed by seasonal

Fig. 1 - **Catchment basin from Plan Jaxaay development plan in the Pikine neighborhood**

May 2013. Photograph by the author.

flooding. From 2007 to 2013, nine children had drowned in the basin because of lack of fence or buffer zone between the basin and the surrounding areas. The basin has also become an unofficial site of wastewater disposal of neighborhood residents, and the water within discolored, brackish, and foul smelling. Trash, especially plastic rubbish, surrounds the edges of the basin, and can be found in nearby soil up to a meter deep. Not only is the basin unappealing to visual and olfactory senses, but it harbors within it vectors of illness and disease, and is an especially conducive environment for mosquito breeding. Residents near the catchment basins report increased rates of malaria and gastrointestinal illnesses. Now that water is only rarely pumped out, seasonal flooding is not relieved, but also the catchment basin risks to spill out into the neighborhood in the event of an intense rainfall event. What was supposed to relieve flooding stress has only seemed to create more. The community in Pikine has started to mobilize and search for solutions to persistent dangers posed by flooding, and *Eaux Secours* is an important part of this effort.

The role of hip-hop in Dakar

Hip-hop in Dakar is more than just an art or music expression, but is a practice deeply intertwined in the political performance and production of space of Dakar's youth (Pieterse 2010, Clark 2012, Fredericks 2013). There are thousands of hip-hop groups in Dakar today, and the poor outskirts of the city (the *banlieue*) house an overwhelming majority of these groups (Fredericks 2013). Hip-hop in Dakar takes inspiration from American rap music and movements from the 1980s, which were a way for disenfranchised urban, black youth in the United States to voice societal grievances and imagine a different future. The 1980s in Dakar was marked by political volatility and numerous massive youth strikes occurred in Dakar later in

the decade (Herson 2011). In 1989 particularly, school strikes occurred with such frequency that the year was declared void, and the youth of Dakar found themselves feeling frustrated and with nothing to do but exchange ideas and envision a different reality (Ntarangwi 2010).

Hip-hop continued to grow in importance for youth culture and political mobilization throughout the 1990s, spurred by the increasing globalization around the world driven by economic development and technological innovation (Ntarangwi 2010, Beach and Sernhede 2012). At first, hip-hop in Dakar imitated American styles in terms of musical underpinnings and lyric construction, but it soon became something uniquely Senegalese because of its deep roots in neighborhoods and active discourse of transforming the city into a more just and equal place (Fredericks 2013). In the midst of rapid globalization in urban Senegal, many youth in the poor, densely populated neighborhoods like Pikine found themselves at the bottom of a social order that was transforming life around the world. They saw the consequences of this inequality in the characteristics of their neighborhoods, such as inaccessibility to water and sanitation, high unemployment, difficulty attaining education, and inaccessibility of social mobility (Ntarangwi 2010). Artists began to mobilize and organize to change neighborhood practices, and re-imagined a city with the poor neighborhoods as the core of urban life. Hip-hop artists did more than represent their neighborhoods through music; they used music to create their neighborhoods, and this legacy continues today (Fredericks 2013).

The power of this youth hip-hop movement in Dakar came to forefront in 2011, as two young rappers created the *Y'en a Marre* (which means "fed up" in Wolof) movement (Resnick 2013). The early focal point for the *Y'en a Marre* movement was the presidential elections in which President Wade was running for an unconstitutional third term presidency (Fredericks 2013). The *Y'en a Marre* movement organized youth to protest government inadequacies, succeeded in registering thousands of youth across the country to vote, and ultimately helped to defeat the incumbent Wade in the following year's election (Resnick 2013). These successes by the *Y'en a Marre* movement inspired hip-hop groups across the country, and particularly in the poor neighborhoods of Dakar, to translate their music into action. *Eaux Secours* in one such hip-hop group that took this call to action seriously.

The case of Eaux Secours

The group *Eaux Secours* (which means "water emergency" in French) was created when three friends from the Pikine neighborhood came together after the flooding season in 2012. Once again houses across the neighborhood flooded and residents waded for months through water to city streets. During the dry season, the flood line is visible on the exterior walls of houses, a constant reminder of what occurred and what will come again once the rains start. At its worst, water was knee-deep and people barricaded their houses with discarded trash to try to protect against total devastation. The three founders of the group experienced this flooding in their own households, as well as that of their family and friends. They used the same political platform through which other young people in Dakar have made their voices heard: hip-hop. Their first album was released in April 2013, and the first music video released on YouTube a few months later.

When initially asked to describe their group objectives, they responded that their primary objective was "*la lute contre les inondations*" — the fight against flooding. Puzzled, I asked how you stop flooding, a process and problem more ascribed to natural phenomenon and disasters. They explained that flooding is not only a natural phenomenon, but is also socially produced. They described that only certain neighborhoods in Dakar flood, and that flooding occurs disproportionately in poor neighborhoods like Pikine. They attribute this increased risk of

flooding in Pikine not necessarily to physical geographic contexts of the neighborhood (Diop 2013), but to social processes of exclusion and uneven development within Dakar. This perception of the flooding risk (Fatti and Patel 2012) drives their crafting of song lyrics, and also results in local material improvements to the city. These material improvements of *Eaux Secours*, and of *Y'en a Marre* in general (Fredericks 2013), is an important way that artists shape and transform the city of Dakar. These material improvements are also highlighted in their most recent music video.

The music video shows members of the group singing against the backdrop of flooded neighborhoods. Other than group members, most of the other people featured are children, representing the importance of flooding as a public health risk to the most vulnerable of the neighborhood's populations. Also shown are standing water, small ponds, and catchment basins that have experienced eutrophication, or the dense growth of algae and small plant life because of the increased nutrient load, presumably from human waste occurring nearby. Children play next to these eutrophic ponds, a visual rhetorical move to which the viewer responds with disgust. Also shown on the video are the remnants of houses that were evacuated, though not totally destroyed, under the *Plan Jaxaay*. These house ruins are now combinations of falling walls, eutrophic standing water, and trash. Trash has been a major problem associated with the *Plan Jaxaay*, as people use catchment basins as disposal points for used household water and trash because of the sporadic nature of urban service provision in the neighborhood. Concurrent with these images in the video is the song, *Zero Mbeund*, in which the group criticizes the government for their failed urban planning scheme and what they see as the general neglect of poor populations.

The final scenes of the video show group members and other young men building a trench and retaining wall around the largest pond, picking out large trash pieces, and wading through the green, brackish water along with the word "solution" written across the screen. *Eaux Secours* is an active, transformative agent in the city through political and material "place-making" (Fredericks 2013). They plead for government action, but instead of just raising awareness and calling attention, they engage in the search for local solutions to complex urban problems. Their practice is a kind of vigilante, informal urban development, intervening where the government has demonstrated inadequacy in resolving problems. Through the political engagements of their music and the material engagements of their redevelopment projects, *Eaux Secours* claims their "rights and rewards of the city through occupying its physical space and the space of public dialogue" (Fredericks 2013: 10). By showing the group engaging in the dirty work of improving the city, they show the potential power of the artist to not only intervene politically, but to make positive material changes in the urban fabric.

In Dakar, the impacts of *Eaux Secours* material work is limited to one or two catchment basin improvements. The magnitude of the problem of seasonal flooding in these neighborhoods cannot be solved by small projects, but rather requires large-scale intervention, the kind that is likely only possible through government projects. These larger projects, however, are misguided, inadequate, and intermittent. *Eaux Secours* acknowledges that the problem is massive and that their interventions are limited, but recognize action as the only option until larger solutions arrive. Through their actions, moreover, they endeavor to call further attention to the plight of poor neighborhoods, which will then warrant action by city planning institutions.

Conclusions

The "creative place-making" movement that undergirds contemporary urban development schemes in the United States and Europe focuses not on the political power of the artist, but

rather the entrepreneurial aspect of cities as they attempt to engage with urbanites and the knowledge economy. The creative city becomes a tool of the powerful and the elite to re-shape urban landscapes into spaces of commerce and opportunity. This kind of creative city, where creativity comes from above and is projected onto unsuspecting places, stands in stark contrast to the political movements of art rooted deeply in place that take place around the world.

In Dakar, the defining social and political movement of the past three years has been the power of the artist to effect change. Artists in Dakar actively and consciously produce urban space, particularly in poor neighborhoods on the outskirts of the city. Hip-hop movements in Dakar do more than change social and political spaces of the city, they also intervene in the material constitution of their neighborhoods, neighborhoods that are on the physical, social, and political periphery of contemporary Dakar. They alter physical spaces to align with their political ideals of equality, democracy, and the importance of youth.

The example of *Eaux Secours* and hip-hop artists in Dakar prompts us to reconsider the position and power of the artist in the city. Is the artist privileged only as part of a larger creative class, a class characterized by high education and income that is described by urban planners? What about the artist who speaks to the urban condition from the vantage point of the dispossessed, are not their voices also useful in imagining the future of cities? The answer, perhaps, is an issue of positionality. *Eaux Secours* speaks from their position of youth in a poor, disenfranchised neighborhood of Dakar. They are not speaking *about* problems or ways to improve the city, as they urban planners in the *Plan Jaxaay*. Rather, these artists speak *from* these places that need improvement. These real, lived experiences of people in marginal places are perhaps one of the most useful tools to consider in imagining better urban futures.

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BOOK REVIEWS

European Regions in the Strategy to Emerge from the Crisis: the Territorial Dimension of the "Europe 2020"

Rubén Camilo Lois González, Valerià Paül Carril, Editors, Santiago de Compostela: Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Servizo de Publicatións e Intercambio Científico, 2013, 173 p.
ISBN 978-84-15876-11-3

Reviewed by MARIA-GIANINA VLĂDEANU, University of Bucharest, Romania

The book gathers a synthesis of the results of the ESPON (European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion) research project, called „Spatial Indicators for a ´Europe 2020 Strategy´ Territorial Analysis" (SIESTA), developed between June 2011 and April 2013. The aim of the ESPON SIESTA project was to provide evidence referring to the territorial dimension of the EU2020S through identifying development opportunities for different types of regions, in relation to the objectives and pilot initiatives established in the Strategy (European Commission – ESPON Project, 2013).

The book includes the academic considerations of the main ideas developed within the project and it is structured in 12 thematic sections realized by the researchers involved in the SIESTA project. Most of these thematic sections are accompanied by rich spatial information, which is synthesized in different indicators represented for the EU member states through maps at different scales – from NUTS 0 to NUTS 3.

The first two chapters (Presentation: seeking the territorial dimension of the "Europe 2020 Strategy" and The "Europe 2020 Strategy" as a vision to emerge from the crisis: an overall interpretation) present the SIESTA project, its objectives and the research group. The EU2020S is a document edited by the European Commission and it represents the EU's development scheme for the period 2010 -2020; the main goal of the Strategy is the overcome of the economic crisis through sustainable growth and development. In this sense, the EU2020S aims to bring the benefits of the economic growth across the European Union in order to strengthen the territorial cohesion (European Commission, 2010).

The primary objective of the SIESTA project was to elaborate an atlas, which represents also the main scientific product of the project. The maps are represented at close spatial scales and they include some territorial indicators that reflect the present territorial situation in relation to the EU2020S' objectives.

This is also the main objective of the third part of the work (Remarks on how to map the Europe 2020 Strategy), realised by Marta Calvet, Andreu Ulied and Oriol Biosca (MCRIT SL, Barcelona). The atlas is available also in digital format on the official website: http:// mapfinder.espon.eu.

The territorial indicators are grouped in three main categories: sustainable growth, smart growth and inclusive growth. According to these territorial indicators, there were defined three main types of maps: a) thematic maps, referring to the present territorial situation; b) maps that reflect the degree of accomplishment of the EU2020S' targets; c) maps of the large urban zones (LUZ), reflecting the present state of the cities in relation to each analysed theme.

The forth part of the book (Growth and

competitiveness in a crisis differently affecting European territories, authors: Lidia Mierzejewska - Institute of Socio-Economic Geography and Spatial Management, and Adam Mickiewicz - Poznań University) refers to competiveness and other economic issues, taking into consideration that the EU2020S promotes growth.

The fifth chapter (Territorial dissimilarities in energy and climate change, realised by Francesco Bonsinetto, Angelo Cannizzaro, Enzo Falco, Barbara Lino and Giuseppe Modica), analysis the sustainable economic growth through promoting the „green" energy. EU2020S proposes to diminish the climatic changes and to overcome the economic crisis through methods less aggressive for the environment.

Chapter VI (Research, development and innovation across the European territories, authors: Niamh Moore-Cherry, Delphine Ancien and Ruth Comerford-Morris) analysis research and innovation in relation to smart growth. EU2020S mentions that smart growth means to develop an economy based on knowledge and innovation, which implies investments in education, research and innovation, and an efficient use of resources.

Education (mainly higher education) represents a main part of the smart growth priority promoted by the EU2020S. Higher education is directly connected with growth, research, innovation and competitiveness so that it benefits from an independently chapter that details all these aspects – The territorial dimensions of education, authors: Niamh Moore-Cherry and Delphine Ancien.

The use of the information and communication technology (the digital or computerized society) represents an essential domain of the smart growth. Access to using computers, internet in general and high speed internet in particular, represent growth indicators. All these aspects are analysed by Lila Leontidou, Alex Afouxenidis, Stelios Gialis and Anastasia Stringli in the eight section of the book – Persisting digital society territorial divides.

Chapter IX (The territorial configuration of employment and lifelong learning, realised by Ioan Ianoş, Nataşa Văidianu, Daniela Stoian, Cristina Merciu and Andrei Schvab – CICADIT, University of Bucharest) refers to the main EU2020S' objective to create jobs, competences and the labour market reform. In order to cope with the aging of the population, the increased dynamics of the population and the global competition, the European Union of the year 2020 has to fully use its working potential. In the same time, lifelong learning and the competences' development are indispensable to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Chapter X (Territorial dissimilarities in poverty and exclusion, authors: Petros Petsimeris, José Ignacio Vila Vázquez and Maria Luisa Caputo) is dedicated to poverty. The prediction is that the number of poor people is increasing due to unemployment as an effect of the economic crisis, so that the EU2020S aims to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or of social exlusion.

The last two sections (XI – The uneven territories of the EU2020S through a composite index and territorial clustering / authors: Valeriá Paül Carril and Alejandra María Feal Pérez; and XII – Territorial policy recommendation to emerge from the crisis / authors: Xosé Carlos Macía Arce and María José Pineira Mantinán) reunite the main ideas of the book. On the one hand, the authors propose a regional assessment of the European territory through a composite index and a cluster analysis. On the other hand, the authors make a synthesis of the policy recommendations obtained within the project, in order to establish the European Union's strategy to overcome the economic crisis.

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La politique européenne de cohésion (The European Cohesion Policy)

Marjorie Jouen, Paris : La documentation française, 2011, 188 p.
ISBN 978-2-11-008330-2, (in French)

Reviewed by MATEI COCHECI, University of Bucharest, Romania

The book represents a thorough analysis of the European Union's cohesion policy since its first plans of implementation in the mid 1980's. The evolution of the policy throughout the years is assessed not only from a historical point of view, but also by taking into account the different factors that have modelled and changed certain aspects of the policy, as well as the debates surrounding the subject. As a result, the book consists of four distinct parts, each dealing with a certain period in the cohesion policy's evolution.

The first part focuses on the premises of the cohesion policy's emergence and its implementation in the first two programming periods, 1989-1993 and 1994-1999. Besides offering technical details, like the six founding principles of the cohesion policy, its priorities or the privileged areas of intervention, the author also realizes a critical comment of the policy's scientific foundation, implying its inspiration from the Keynesian economy and 1970s-1980s development theories. Begun as a policy meant to aid regions and states lagging behind from a social or economical viewpoint, thus fostering solidarity among the member states, the cohesion policy relied on certain strategic objectives and financial mechanisms (structural funds, Community Initiative Programmes) in its implementation. Its results at the end of the century were considered to be mixed, as territorial inequalities between regions persisted although the gap between the member states was slightly reduced.

The second part of the book deals with the challenges induced to the cohesion policy by the great enlargement of the European Union at the beginning of the new century, with a special focus on the 2000-2006 programming period. The author outlines the enlargement's impact on the cohesion policy, as all the new member states have an economic situation which qualifies them under the cohesion objective. Nevertheless, this period is also characterized by an emphasis of the debate on the cohesion policy, with critics outlining its ever-growing weight in the Union's budget, as well as the difficulties in quantifying its impact and overall added value.

The third part presents a detailed analysis of the 2007-2013 programming period: priority objectives, financial instruments, distribution of the financial resources, implementation methods. Furthermore, the author realizes a summary of the cohesion policy in France in the same period, outlining some of the important projects that were co-financed through structural funds. In the end, the impact of the financial crisis in forcing certain adaptations of the cohesion policy is outlined, as well as its limits and improvement possibilities.

The final part of the book presents a summary of different debates regarding the next programming period (2014-2020), in strong relationship with the Europe 2020 Strategy. The author highlights the contrasting opinion on the cohesion policy offered by different reports (World Bank Report and the Barca Report – 2009), as well as offering possible solutions for a better implementation of the policy in the future, through instruments such as multi-level governance or changes in the structure of the Cohesion Reports.

The book doesn't limit itself to a strict presentation of the different aspects (strategic,

implementation, financial mechanisms) of the policy – it also presents the way in which the policy and its results are viewed by different documents (reports), its relation with the European Union's strategies (Lisbon Strategy, Europe 2020 Strategy) and other policies (especially the Common Agricultural Policy) and the way it was influenced by different elements such as the enlargement of the European Union or the financial crisis in the 2009-2010 period.

The text is well organized and enables the author to outline the changes suffered by the cohesion policy from its inception until now: the abridgement of its priorities (from 6 objectives in 1989 to 3 objectives in 2007) and financial instruments (from 16 Community Initiative Programmes in 1989 to just four in 2000 and none in 2007), the continuous rise of the policy in the budget of the European Union, its shift from a policy oriented strictly towards aiding regions and states that are lagging behind to one which is also designed towards competitiveness and efficiency (as stated by the Competitiveness objective in the 2007-2013 programming period). The well-structured information on these different facets of the cohesion policy is also supported by text boxes which detail certain aspects (like the evolution of the Community Initiative Programmes) or present case studies (e.g. Ireland as a net beneficiary of the Cohesion Policy in the 1990s). The few tables, graphs and maps in the book offer a good synthesis of the elements presented, especially in the chapter regarding the 2007-2013 programming period.

While it's not the objective of this book, the author manages to reach subjects such as the influence of the French vision of territorial planning (*l'aménagement du territoire*) on the cohesion policy (as stated also by Faludi, 2004) or the change in paradigm caused by the introduction of the term *territorial cohesion*.

All in all, the book offers a good synthesis of the evolution of the European Union's cohesion policy, presenting the different factors involved in this process and the debates surrounding the subject with great objectivity. However, the author doesn't refrain from using critical comments when necessary, especially in the later chapters where she offers good examples, based on a rather extensive literature review, on how the policy can be improved in the future.

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Aims and scopes

Analysis of the urban and regional condition needs to be interdisciplinary. In reality, urban researchers usually tend to belong to a discipline reflecting their training whether as sociologists, geographers, planners or any number of subjects concerned with the study of space and place. Our training very often endorses an appreciation of how other disciplines explore the city. For the journal the acknowledgement of the many disciplines that concerned with understanding cities and regions will be indicated by the different disciplinary back-grounds reflected in the papers published. Articles will be published by geographers, sociologists, planners, economists, political scientists, to mention just few of the disciplines involved in urban and regional study.

The Journal of Urban and Regional Analysis plans to be a key outlet publishing topical articles dealing with cities and regions. In later issues we plan to include sections devoted to notes and comments as well as a policy section outlining and discussing state and non-state initiatives aimed at improving cities and regions, together with the problems confronted by their implementation.

Instructions to Authors

1. The Journal of Urban and Regional Analysis seeks to redefine and revigorate the links between geography, sociology, planning, economy, political science. It aims to publish original academic research, critical studies and discussions of the highest scholar standard in the field of urban and regional development. Submitted papers will be evaluated on the basis of their creativity, academic quality and contributions to advancing understanding of the complex problems related to urban and regional development.

2. Submitted manuscripts must be original, unpublished contributions. They must not be submitted or accepted by any other publications. All articles submitted to the Journal will be available online, free of charge.

3. One electronic copy of the manuscript (sent by email in PDF format) should be submitted to either of the two Editors listed below.

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