



SPESP Study Programme on European Spatial Planning

Client: DG REGIO, European Commission
Period: 1998-2006

During the developmental process of the ESDP (European Spatial Development Prospective), it became clear that the scientific basis for policy making needed to be improved. In particular, it was necessary to:

- 1-select indicators for spatial development
- 2-suggest possible strategic directions, which should be followed up and elaborated in policy terms.

In consequence, a Study Programme on European Spatial Planning (SPESP) was set up.

The SPESP assignment was, on the basis of existing research, to further develop the concept of urban-rural partnership, to test the criteria for spatial development, and to develop ideas for cartographic illustrations of spatial policies.

More than 200 researchers, from all 15 Member States, have participated in this work, through National Focal Points working in 13 multinational working groups.

The Study Programme on European Spatial Planning (SPESP) objective is to examine four interrelated questions:

- 1- How can the concept of "urban-rural partnership" be given concrete expression and adapted for policy application?
- 2- How should the criteria for spatial differentiation proposed in the ESDP be conceptualised? Is it possible, based on already-existing data, to produce European-wide analyses using these criteria?
- 3- How can spatial policy aims be visualised, in the form of maps and illustrations?
- 4- Is a network of research institutions from all the Member States an effective way of organising this work?

