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The place where streams seek ground. Towards a new territorial governmentality: the meaning and usage of the concept of territorial cohesion in the European Union

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Appendix B Possible Interview Questions

Introduction

The following list of questions was used to structure the interviews with people who worked for European Union institutions, or organisations associated with them, in Brussels in 2006 and had more or less to do with territorial cohesion. As not every question in this list was appropriate for each interview (e.g. due to time constraints or the expertise of the interviewee), the list is not so much a checklist but a list of possibilities. Yet, for all the most important questions were those on meaning and usage, especially the concept's usage, those on specific fields were used the most variable (e.g. someone who hardly deals with European spatial planning will not be questioned on it), and the ones on related topics were asked least often; and other questions, such as follow-up questions (e.g. why do you think this is the case), were added during the interview.

Meaning and Usage

Territorial Cohesion Usage:

- How much of your contemporary work is related to territorial cohesion (i.e. roughly/approximately)?
- How much importance does territorial cohesion have according to you (e.g. when compared to other topics as, for instance, Trans-European Networks (TENs), Common Agriculture Policy (CAP), Single European Market (SEM))?
- For which issues and activities do you not use the concept of territorial cohesion at the moment?
- For which issues and activities do you use the concept of territorial cohesion at the moment?
- For which policy-fields did you use the concept of territorial cohesion (mostly) (e.g. cohesion policy, spatial policy, SG(E)I, SF)?
- For which (other) issues do you think the concept of territorial cohesion will (mostly) be used in the future?

Territorial Cohesion Meaning

- What does the concept of territorial cohesion mean according to you (e.g. its definition, the picture shown or goal set by it)?
- How did you come at this meaning of territorial cohesion (e.g. from yourself, ESPON, DG XVI, national administration)?
- Do you think that other (political) actors have another account of territorial cohesion and, if so, how do you notice this?

Territorial cohesion in specific fields:

IGCs

- How is the debate on competencies conducted while the Constitutional Treaty was voted against by “the French” and “the Dutch” and (how) will this change (e.g. not, more formal, become a non-issue)?
- Are you in favour for a EU-competency for territorial cohesion?
- What would change in your lobbying, political and/or policy-making activities if the EU had a competency for territorial cohesion policy?

- In which way is the debate about the competency issue for territorial cohesion policy different from the competency issue for spatial policy?

European spatial planning

- What is the substantive relation between spatial policy and cohesion policy?
- What is the substantive relation between territorial cohesion and polycentrism?
- Are there difficulties to reach territorial cohesion at the various levels (e.g. EU, transnational, regional, local), and if so: which territorial level should be emphasised?
- Will the possible sequel of the ESDP substantively differ from the ESDP when more focus is laid upon territorial cohesion, and if so: in which way (e.g. emphasis on SG(E)I, less notification of the urban-rural relationship, no account of environmental issues, less dominance of TEN-T projects)?

Cohesion/Regional Policy:

- What is the status of territorial cohesion compared to social cohesion and economic cohesion (e.g. no added value, on a par, social and economic cohesion fall under territorial cohesion)?
- Who do Services of General (Economic) Interest fit into the “territorial cohesion picture”?
- Is Cohesion Policy heading towards a new/other direction (e.g. as means for regional redistribution, as instrument for higher competitiveness)?
- Is territorial cohesion part of a (new) territorial way of thinking in the EU?
- Might territorial cohesion improve the effectiveness of Cohesion Policy by policy coordination (e.g. with other EU, national, regional policies)?
- Are there difficulties to reach economic, social and/or territorial cohesion at the various levels (e.g. EU, transnational, regional, local), and if so: which territorial level should be emphasised?

Structural Funds:

- What do you think territorial cohesion means in light of the SF (e.g. a change in Interreg programmes, ERDF and or and/or Cohesion Fund)?
- Does territorial cohesion mostly entail a redistribution of (financial) resources towards the less developed regions (i.e. convergence), a (financial) incentive for less developed regions to increase their competitiveness, a (financial) resource for regions with a high potential of development (regional competitiveness), or all of these objectives? (And when the latter is chosen: how to balance the various objectives)?
- How did/do you use the concept of territorial cohesion in the intergovernmental negotiations on the new SF-period and lobbying for funding of “your” projects?
- How can territorial cohesion play a part in the usage of SF (e.g. increase effectiveness by policy coherence, give the regions a major role)?

Territorial cohesion related topics:

Community Model:

- Which relationships do you see between the discussions on European governance (e.g. the EC’s White Paper) and the Community Model in your activities (e.g.

“good governance” and a coordinated polity, multi-level governance and the Community Method)?

- Which relationships do you see between the Community Model and the role of what government (e.g. regional, national and supranational) should do in the EU (e.g. SGEI, SGI, spatial planning)?
- Is there referred to territorial cohesion when the topics of European governance and the Community Model are discussed, if so: how (e.g. a compared to the Community Method other way of organising national decision-makers on the Community level in territorial policy)?
- Is there a special relation between the role of government in European governance and territorial policies, and if so: which (e.g. as making the administrative part of a “state”)?
- In which way does territorial cohesion policy (not) imply/mean policy coherence by territorial coordination of sectoral policies?
- How can territorial cohesion ensure the beginning of the formation of a “state polity” with coherent levels of EU-policy on the supranational, transnational, national and/or regional levels?

Territoriality:

- Is the question of territory addressed in your activities, and if so: how (e.g. as characteristic of a state/government, the geography of the EU)?
- How is territorial cohesion related to territories in your activities (e.g. to regional or national policy, territorial cohesion in which territories, which territories push territorial cohesion forward)?
- In which way is the territorial dimension of territorial cohesion discussed in those fields in which your activities relate to territorial cohesion (e.g. taken for granted, explicit disagreement, consensual deliberation)?
- Do you notice a lack in mutual correspondence between the various member states in ways of territorial governance, and if so: how?
- How can the concept of territorial cohesion construct the European type of a territorial way of doing things?

Democratisation of the EU:

- Do you think a (possible) “democratic deficit” might be a cause for the present slowing-down of European integration, and if so: in which way (e.g. people having the idea that they have no influence on the European matters, the unbalanced European integration resulting in dominance of economic policies)?
- Do you think the democratisation of the EU should be a matter of the Community level alone (e.g. creating a European “demos”, give more powers to the EP, make the procedures more transparent) or for a more multi-level approach (e.g. more powers for regions and local actors, creating strong regional/local communities)?
- Is the concept of territorial cohesion mentioned in discussion on the democratisation of the EU?
- Do you think that the making of territorial cohesion policy is a good example of a democratic decision-making process (e.g. in relation with the making of the ESDP, in accordance with the principles for “good EU governance”)?