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| Project: | BBSR Territorial Agenda 2020+ |
| **Title:** | Territorial Agenda 2030 – Revised proposal |
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**Since the NTCCP meeting February 2020 (Zagreb) we…**

* **Adjusted** to the discussion at the NTCCP meeting in February 2020 (Zagreb) and written NTCCP comments received until 11.03.2020, the results of the survey launched by the Finnish Presidency, and the written procedure on open questions within the Task Force.

**Hierarchy of objectives**

Streamlining Territorial Agenda communications making them more accessible, separating levels of aims, objectives, priorities etc. The current logic / hierarchy of objectives is below, though level names should be agreed and further streamlined.

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| The overall aim | A sustainable future for all places and people in Europe |
| Objectives | A Just Europe and a Green Europe |
| Priorities | Six priorities (3 for each objective) |
| Sub-priorities | 2 to 3 commitments or policy suggestions for each priority |

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**Territorial Agenda 2030**

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Draft version, April 2020

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|  | **Territorial Agenda 2030** |
|  | **A future for all places** |
|  | **I. Preamble** |
|  | We, the Ministers responsible for spatial planning, territorial development and/or territorial cohesion, in cooperation with the European Commission and with the endorsement of the European Committee of the Regions, have reviewed the Territorial Agenda launched in 2007 and updated in 2011. We agree on the Territorial Agenda 2030. |
|  | We encourage our colleagues in neighbouring countries to take note of the Territorial Agenda and join in putting it into practice at European, transnational and cross-border levels. They are welcome to use the Territorial Agenda within their countries at national, regional and local levels. |
|  | We encourage all players involved in spatial planning and territorial development policies at all administrative levels in the EU and neighbouring countries to put the Territorial Agenda into practice. The Territorial Agenda applies to all (types of) places, focusing on mutual relations and people’s well-being. |
|  | The Territorial Agenda draws on the conclusions of the ESPON ‘State of the European Territory Report’ (2019), the ESPON ‘European Territorial Reference Framework’ (2019) and the European Commission’s ‘Seventh Cohesion Report’ (2017). It also takes into consideration recent reports on spatial planning, territorial cohesion and territorial development, Cohesion policy and the territorial dimension of sector policies from the European Commission, the European Committee of the Regions, the European Investment Bank and ESPON. |
| (7a) | The Territorial Agenda takes into account recent policy frameworks and agendas including the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (2015), the Paris Agreement (2015), United Nations New Urban Agenda (2016), European Commission reflection paper ‘Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030’ (2019), the the proposal for future Cohesion Policy 2021-2027 (2018), Urban Agenda for the EU (2016), the revised Leipzig Charter (2020), Cork 2.0 Declaration on a Better Life in Rural Areas (2016) and OECD principles on Urban Policy and Rural Policy (2019) as well as the European Green Deal, and its Sustainable Europe Investment Plan and Just Transition Mechanism (2020). |
|  | The Territorial Agenda provides an action-oriented framework to promote territorial cohesion in Europe. Promoting territorial cohesion is a European Union aim introduced by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Art. 3, TEU). Territorial cohesion means promoting a balanced and harmonious territorial development between and within countries, regions and cities, as well as ensuring a future for all places and people in the EU, building on the diversity of places and subsidiarity. It enables more equal opportunities, incl. access to public services, for people and enterprises, wherever they are located. Territorial cohesion reinforces solidarity to promote convergence and reduce inequalities between better-off places and those with less prosperous future perspectives or lagging behind. This benefits Europe as a whole and each individual country. |
|  | The Territorial Agenda provides strategic orientation for spatial planning and for calls strengthening the territorial dimension of all policies at all governance levels. It seeks to promote an inclusive and sustainable future for all places and to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Europe. |
|  | It is essential to limit inequalities which undermine the foundation on which the EU, Member States and thriving municipalities and regions build their success. This can only be achieved by paying more attention to the diversity of places in Europe, along with their development potential and challenges.  While revising the Territorial Agenda, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed policy making and future development outlooks. As implications and responses vary across territories, the pandemic shows that territory matters and that our territories are highly interdependent. Territorial development policies and the cooperation on joint objectives are essential to increase the resilience of municipalities, regions and countries, and strengthen their recovery processes. |
|  | In line with the TFEU (Art. 174 and 175), all Union policies and actions should contribute to economic, social and territorial cohesion. Working towards territorial cohesion and finding the optimal balance between sustainability, inclusiveness and competitiveness through integrated territorial development while seeking to limit inequalities between people and between places requires joint efforts of sector policies, municipal, regional, national, EU and other authorities, as well as various groups of society.  Municipalities and regions might need external support to ensure inclusive and sustainable development. Among others this is supported by EU Cohesion Policy, its objectives and investments in all regions. This is of particular relevance for territories with less prosperous future perspectives, territories lagging behind, and territories suffering from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps.  The European Green Deal and its Sustainable Europe Investment Plan and Just Transition Mechanism offer the opportunity to promote synergies between the Territorial Agenda and overarching EU strategies and policies. The Green Deal links green and just objectives, as it aims at combating territorially unevenly dispersed effects of the energy transition and thereby improving the overall territorial balance in Europe. This is in line with the idea of territorial cohesion and the place-based approach building on the diverse potential of all places. |
|  | We call on those involved in territorial development and strategic spatial planning at all levels to take on board the Territorial Agenda priorities. Furthermore, we call on those responsible for designing and implementing sector policies – at all levels of governance – to take the priorities of the Territorial Agenda into consideration. Coherence between all EU, national and sub-national policies is important for territorial cohesion. Most policies have significant territorial impacts and influence development opportunities of territories in different ways. Policy coordination can significantly increase coherence and effectiveness of policies and reduce negative effects as the result of conflicting policies. Policy coordination and effective multi-level policy framework is a common principle of the Territorial Agenda and the Leipzig Charter. |
|  | We call upon Member States, regions, cities, towns and other places to contribute to inclusive and sustainable futures for all places and people. Places with common potential or challenges can collaborate in finding common solutions. Places with complementary potential can explore their comparative advantages together and thereby create additional development potential. We shall facilitate their ability to develop more effective policy responses through closer cooperation. |
|  | The place‐based approach to policy making contributes to territorial cohesion and polycentric development. It is based on horizontal and vertical coordination, evidence‐informed policy making and integrated territorial development. It addresses various levels of governance (multi-level governance approach) contributing to subsidiarity. It ultimately aims to unleash unique territorial potential related to place-based capital, knowledge and assets. The development and implementation of regional and local strategies with a place-based approach will contribute to long-term development and competitiveness for places. |
|  | The place-based approach is a common principle of the Territorial Agenda and the Leipzig Charter. The Territorial Agenda advocates this approach as an overarching principle for all places and policy sectors. The Leipzig Charter provides guidance for applying the approach in urban areas and their functional regions. We therefore support strengthened cooperation between and across spatial levels. |
|  | We call upon communities and societal groups across Europe to contribute to overcoming growing development differences between people and between places. Building bridges between people with different incomes, educational backgrounds, cultures, traditions and religions is key to keeping Europe together. We shall facilitate cooperation between groups of society to reduce segregation and promote social inclusion as well as use diversity as an asset for well-being. |
|  | The diversity of places in Europe is an underused potential. Place-based policy making can help release untapped potential. Joining efforts across sector policies, governance levels, places and societal groups is essential for an inclusive and sustainable Europe that offers future perspectives for all people and places, protects common livelihoods and shapes transitions. |

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|  | **II. Why we need to act** |
|  | Recent studies e.g. from ESPON, the European Commission, the European Committee of the Regions, the European Investment Bank and other international, national and regional players, highlight that Europe faces major economic, societal and environmental challenges but also has great development potential to improve living conditions in all places and for all people. This requires policy responses with a strong territorial dimension and coordinated approaches acknowledging and using the diversity and specificities of places. |
|  | Europe consists of different types of places, such as capital regions, metropolitan areas, small and medium-sized towns, peri-urban areas, rural areas, inner peripheries, peripheral areas, northernmost areas, sparsely populated areas, islands, coastal areas, mountainous areas, outermost regions, cross-border regions, areas of demographic decline and areas in economic transition. These have very different development potential and challenges. At all levels, from sub-local to pan-European, disparities between places and between people as well as environmental risks and pressures increase. These are driven by economies of scale, imbalanced access to markets and qualified labour, disparities in quality of governance and in public services. Furthermore, the links and flows between places, especially along corridors, affect their capacity to realise potential or respond to challenges. |
|  | Key challenges and potential for local and regional development in Europe are linked to increasing imbalances, as well as the need for sustainable development and actions to address climate change challenges. A common feature is the importance of good government and governance. |
|  | **Good government and governance** |
|  | The quality of government and governance processes is an important cross-cutting principle for local and regional development. It matters for the well-being of society and is a pre-requisite for long-term sustainable increases in living standards, investments, social trust and political legitimacy. Cooperation across sector policies and levels of government and governance are essential for the development and implementation of place-based strategies. |
|  | As highlighted in the Seventh Cohesion Report, the quality of government and governance varies across Europe. The largest differences are between countries, with variations also within countries. Poor quality of government risks to diminish marginal utility and returns on investments in infrastructure, human capital and technology in an area. |
|  | **People and places drift apart – increasing imbalances and inequalities** |
|  | Europe’s changing social and economic geography is accompanied by increasing inequalities, in particular the intra-regional ones where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, driving apart people and places. Some groups of society and communities feel that European and national objectives and outlooks do not address their concerns and prospects. This is expressed in the debate about the ‘geography of discontent’. Indeed, widening social and economic disparities in Europe have a spatial dimension, e.g. segregation within towns, cities or regions, as well as places within countries or within the EU drifting apart. Increasing inequalities and disparities lead to a considerable diversity of future perspectives, which seem to be more promising for some than for others. The Territorial Agenda emphasises these challenges and brings them to the attention of policy makers. |
|  | Action is needed for: |
|  | * **Quality of life:** The underlying objective of all public policies is to increase citizen well-being and quality of life. Well-being and quality of life go beyond economic performance, living standards and purely material aspects. They have a territorial dimension ranging from disparities between neighbourhoods such as social exclusion, to disparities between regions and countries and can also include environmental aspects. |
|  | * **Services of general interest:** The accessibility, affordability and quality of public services is important to quality of life and business development. Needs for greater cost-effectiveness and efficient public management drive services to withdraw or cluster in certain locations. At the same time, expectations of service availability and quality increase. Differences in access to services of general interest risk driving service providers, enterprises and social activities to relocate to areas with better access in the medium to long run. New technologies for online services can reduce the sensitivity of peripheral areas to such relocation pressures. At the same time, there are increasing challenges in access to affordable housing, e.g where housing is replaced by temporary accommodation and tourism services significantly reducing the housing stock and contributing to homelessness, gentrification, and social exclusion. |
|  | * **Demographic and societal imbalances:** Ageing, domestic and intra-EU migration, including depopulation, pose challenges to Europe’s welfare systems and to local and regional development. These demographic dynamics have severe social implications including increased social exclusion and inequalities, as well as challenges for public service provision, labour markets and housing. Ageing and migration point to further concentration in urban areas along with depopulation for some rural and peripheral areas. This especially concerns remote areas that lack access to public services, economic and social opportunities. Extra-European migration flows, including outmigration of young and talented people and immigration of refugees, may exacerbate these challenges. |
|  | * **Digitalisation and the 4th industrial revolution:** Digitalisation and disruptive technologies will shape economic and societal development in Europe. The 4th industrial revolution will lead to fusions of technologies and blur the lines between physical, digital and biological systems but also increase the risk of job losses as a result of automation. Economic concentration and an emphasis on new technical solutions rapidly rolled out globally increasingly create ‘winner takes all’ economies, reducing the number of companies leading the way to change as well as where these companies and key players are located. This gives a new topicality to regions and urban agglomerations in economic transition. Public authorities and decision makers need to innovate constantly and engage in stakeholder dialogues to prepare for transitions and shape policies effectively – taking into consideration data protection and privacy rights. Divides in digital skills and broadband access are a major factor to increased territorial inequalities. Especially elderly and people living in remote areas are often at the risk of being excluded from digital transformation processes. |
|  | * **Employment and economic development:** Local and regional economies in Europe are highly interconnected and interdependent through complex value chains. Economic and employment prospects are affected by local development conditions beyond the influence of local, regional, national and European decision makers. Places with higher levels of competitiveness, research, development and innovation activities and investment capacity tend to have better economic performance and employment opportunities. This reinforces the relative position of better-off places compared to other places and further perpetuates disparities and imbalances. Another aspect is the importance of spatial structures for growth and development. |
|  | * **Interdependencies between places:** While some places in Europe are drifting apart, there are also growing interdependencies between places. These positive and negative externalities mean developments in one place affect potential in another. Changes in one part of Europe can affect other parts of the continent. These interdependencies are most visible in economic concentration and increasing disparities between flourishing (often metropolitan) areas and declining (often rural) areas. It is visible in the persistent core-periphery division in Europe and nationally. Internal and especially EU external borders have disparities and differences in legal, social and political systems that affect local and regional development. Barriers to integration can result in underutilised human, cultural, economic and ecological resources in border regions, exacerbating their peripheral position and social exclusion. |
|  | * **Global embeddedness:** Europe is highly interwoven in the global economy. Local and regional development in Europe is affected by global strategies and geopolitical and socio-economic developments beyond the influence of local and regional decision makers, including dynamics in Eurasia and the Mediterranean. Many European citizens and enterprises participate in worldwide social and economic networks. Consequently, development in European regions, cities and towns is linked to other places and the flow of goods, services, investment, people and ideas around the world. In short, exogenous developments influence development perspectives for places in Europe. The potential and vulnerabilities linked to global developments are not equally distributed across Europe’s towns, cities and regions. |
|  | **Sustainable development and climate change – increasing pressures on the environment** |
|  | Global sustainable development challenges are highly relevant for local and regional development and the living conditions in Europe. This especially concerns climate change, environmental degradation and the transition to a climate-neutral economy. The growing urgency to address climate change, resilience and transition to more sustainable development is emphasised widely in political and societal debates as underlined by the UN ‘Sustainable Development Goals’. A transition to sustainable development holds different potential and challenges for different types of towns, cities and regions. |
|  | Action is needed for: |
|  | * **Climate change:** The impacts of climate change vary considerably across European geographical regions with different impacts and degrees of vulnerability. The increased risks of sea-level rise, drought, desertification, floods and other natural hazards call for place-based responses. Climate change mitigation and adaptation actions can even bring new development opportunities for places. This can be for agriculture, the bioeconomy, green / circular economy and renewable energy production. Climate change impacts as well as mitigation and adaptation actions depend on the territorial context and require tailor-made responses at all governance levels. |
|  | * **Loss of biodiversity and land consumption:** The rapid man-made loss of biodiversity poses severe risks to ecosystems and long-term living conditions. This affects livelihoods, quality of life and local and regional economies. Increasing land take, soil sealing and land-use intensity reduce open spaces, biodiversity and fertile soil, and contribute to urban heat islands impacting the function of ecosystems. |
|  | * **Air, soil and water quality:** This is essential for human well-being. Air pollution, noise, contaminated soil emissions and polluted ground and surface-water bodies cause serious health problems that can correlate with social inequality. Disparities in access to clean air, water and soil exist not only between countries and regions but also between urban and rural areas, as well as inside towns and cities. |
|  | * **Secure, affordable and sustainable energy:** European citizens and enterprises need access to sustainable, secure and affordable energy supplies. This is important for local and regional development. Significant imports from third countries vulnerable to economic or political instability increase problems for energy security. Rising energy prices and emissions highlight the need for sustainable solutions such as renewable energy, greener, low carbon economic activities and other measures increasing energy efficiency and reducing energy consumption. Insufficient energy infrastructure and dependence on existing networks call for diversified energy production and supply, as well as energy market development and integration. |
|  | * **Just Transition:** Investments in renewable energy production, energy savings and low carbon industries are needed all over Europe. Local economies directly or indirectly depending on highly energy intensive or polluting sectors such as coal or heavy industry are particularly challenged by this transition. Just transition can shift the economy away from these forms of production while maintaining quality of life for all, as it recognises that the poorest, most vulnerable people may suffer the greatest impacts of adjusting to a climate-neutral economy. |
|  | * **Circular regional value chains:** Ciruclar economy is an important aspect of the transition to a carbon/climate-neutral economy. The circular economy aims to close material and energy loops through long-lasting design, maintenance, repair, reuse, remanufacturing, refurbishing and recycling. Industrial symbiosis processes in regional value chains are important. The transition of Europe’s economies towards a place-based circular and carbon/climate-neutral model has a territorial dimension. The economic prosperity of places depends on the competitiveness and creativity of their enterprises and start-ups as well as on local assets, characteristics and traditions, cultural, social and human capital and innovation capacities. In general, urban areas are better positioned to pick up related trends than sparsely populated areas and inner peripheries which often lack critical mass. Towns and smaller cities as well as places with high levels of craftmanship might nevertheless benefit from the circular economy in terms of repair, reuse and sharing activities at local and regional level. |
|  | * **Natural, landscape and cultural heritage:** Natural and cultural heritage are local and regional development assets that offer unique development opportunities. Sustainable use of resources should benefit local communities and promote local business opportunities. Overexploitation of these assets however can threaten a local or regional economy. Urbanisation, intense agriculture and fisheries, transport and other infrastructure developments, particularly when uncoordinated locally, can cause severe problems. Increased and uncoordinated exploitation of maritime space and marine resources may impact sustainable development. Changes in land and sea use, urbanisation and mass tourism threaten cultural assets and landscapes and may fragment natural habitats and ecological corridors. |
|  | **Need to act** |
|  | In Europe, increasing inequalities between places and between people as well as unsustainable developments have reached a critical level. They risk undermining the foundation on which the EU, its Member States and thriving municipalities and regions build their success. It is time for concerted action at all geographical and governance levels to ensure positive future perspectives for all people, communities and places in Europe. It is time to better understand and adequately address territorial impacts of sector policies. This We seek to contribute to sustainable development and to keeping the EU together by delivering on the following territorial priorities for the EU. |

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|  | **III. Territorial Priorities for Europe** |
|  | Action is needed to ensure a sustainable future for all places and people in Europe. Actions must be based on:   * a common understanding that development needs and impacts of future developments differ between places (towns, cities and regions) in Europe; and * cooperation and integration of places, policy sectors and groups of society to address complex issues and utilise diverse potential, e.g. through Interreg, or other tools enhancing integrated territorial or local development within EU Cohesion Policy and beyond.   We therefore define two overarching objectives, a Just Europe and a Green Europe, which have six priorities for developing the European territory as a whole and all its places: |
|  | **1. A JUST Europe that offers future perspectives for all places and people** |
|  | The priorities for a Just Europe underline the territorial dimension and spatial planning contributions to overarching policy priorities, such as economic, social and territorial cohesion, the European Pillar of Social Rights, a Europe closer to citizens, sustainable and integrated development of places, Just Transition and territorial integration in Europe. |
|  | **1a. BALANCED EUROPE: Better balanced territorial development utilising Europe’s diversity** |
|  | Europe’s territorial diversity offers considerable development potential. This can contribute to better-balanced territorial development, counteracting excessive concentration in Europe and reducing inequalities between people and between places. Cooperation in polycentric networks of cities and regions contribute to spreading development potential more evenly. Therefore, we will take action to encourage neighbourhoods, municipalities, counties, regions and Member States to cooperate on improving working, living and investing conditions in all places as well as strengthening economic prosperity, innovation capacity and global competitiveness across Europe. |
|  | Polarisation between Europe’s core and its periphery, its capitals, metropolitan areas, cities, towns, rural areas and areas with geographic specificities challenges a better-balanced territorial development. Especially, small and medium-sized towns have underexploited potential to cushion polarisation. They play a crucial role in economic development and social well-being at regional level, especially with regards to national and international accessibility and adequate access to services at local and regional level. We invite policy makers from all levels to promote polycentric development models that offer a role for all towns and cities. |
|  | Europe has diverse territories, such as coastal zones, islands, mountainous areas, inner peripheries, plains, river valleys and lake basins. All these territories have unique development challenges and potential though the remoteness and distinct characteristics of outermost regions mean they face particular development challenges. We will take action to encourage decision makers at all governance levels to unleash the unique potential of territories with specific geographies and adequately address the constraints of these areas through integrated and cooperative approaches. |
|  | **1b. FUNCTIONAL REGIONS: Local and regional development, less inequality between places** |
|  | Cities and towns of all sizes are motors of economic and social development and attractive places for living, working, visiting and investing. Cooperation and networking within and between cities, towns and their surrounding areas in the same functional region create development perspectives for all places. Such functional regions break with existing administrative delineations, differ according to function, are highly dynamic and can shift over time. Decision-makers in cities and towns looking beyond their administrative borders at functional regions and cooperating with their surrounding areas can help their places serve as motors for intra-regional growth. This is to the benefit, rather than expense, of their surrounding communities and rural areas. Together cities, towns and their surrounding areas can ensure a healthy and affordable living environment. We will search for dialogue with decision-makers in cities and towns of all sizes to apply an integrated multilevel governance approach. This means involving people from different governance levels, in particular local and regional ones, policy sectors and groups of society. |
|  | Europe has diverse urban, peri-urban, rural, peripheral and sparsely populated areas. Some of these suffer from segregation or face severe depopulation. Their development is closely related to their unique local characteristics and relationships with other places, accessibility and access to public services, diversified economic activities and entrepreneurship as well as their ecological functions and ecosystem services. We will engage with local and regional decision makers to strengthen cooperation on long-term place-based strategies for these areas and address functional links between neighbouring areas, e.g. through instruments of EU Cohesion Policy and other relevant EU policies, such as integrated territorial investments (ITI) or community-led local development (CLLD) or any other tools enhancing integrated territorial or local development. |
|  | **1c. INTEGRATION BEYOND BORDERS: Living and working across national borders** |
|  | Territorial and maritime cooperation between places in different countries helps make better use of development potential. Joining forces beyond borders, including Interreg programmes and projects, can create critical mass for development, promote synergies and diminish economic, social and ecological fragmentation and negative externalities. This concerns ecosystems, cultural heritage, labour markets, public service provision and city networks divided by internal, external, land or maritime borders. We will take action to embed stable cross-border, transnational and macro-regional cooperation in national, regional and local development strategies. Strategic Interreg cooperation, European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), mainstream cohesion policy programmes, macro-regional strategies, functional regions, cross-border planning and legal cross-border agreements are examples of stable approaches that facilitate cooperation between administrative areas which go beyond single cooperation projects. |
|  | Still today there are many legal and administrative obstacles to deepening cooperation beyond borders. We will intensify dialogue with policy makers at all governance levels to coordinate national sector policies between countries and diminish existing obstacles to cooperation. |
|  | **2. A GREEN Europe that protects common livelihoods and shapes societal transition** |
|  | Green Europe priorities underline the territorial dimension and spatial planning contributions to overarching policy priorities such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the European Green Deal, the Paris Agreement, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, Europe fit for the digital age, sustainable mobility and a fully integrated European transport network, as well as the transition to a circular economy in Europe and the application of an ecosystem-based approach. |
|  | **2a. HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT: Better ecological livelihoods and climate-neutral towns, cities and regions** |
|  | Ecosystems, including agricultural, forest, grassland and marine ecosystems, are fundamental to human existence and important for long-term sustainable development. It is a joint responsibility to ensure that they are well-functioning, resilient, enhanced, and generate income for local populations and businesses. This helps mitigate climate change, combat the loss of biodiversity and ensure the provision of ecosystem services. Joint management is particularly important, taking into consideration different geographical specificities. We support the development of nature-based solutions and green and blue infrastructure networks that link ecosystems and protected areas, in spatial planning and other policies. |
|  | Climate change and the loss of biodiversity risk eroding livelihoods. Risk and disaster management as well as prevention measures are important to building resilient communities. We will respect the natural limits of Europe’s common livelihoods and increase the resilience of all places impacted by climate change. This can be done by developing local and regional strategies for climate-neutral towns, cities and regions. Possible actions include promoting sustainable land-use, restoration of degraded land, combatting deforestation, preserving oceans and water bodies, preventing urban sprawl and urban heat islands, no net land-take by 2050, strengthening the delivery of ecosystem services, disarming ‘ecological bombs’, and improving the integration of terrestrial and maritime spatial planning. |
|  | Europe’s natural and cultural heritage is an unique and diverse asset to be protected and further developed. Areas rich in natural and cultural heritage or unique landscapes need to make best use of these assets and their untapped potential. They need to balance nature conservation and economic development, e.g. by creating environmentally friendly jobs, fostering community growth and well-being, or working with innovative social entrepreneurs. We will concentrate on strengthening awareness and empowering local and regional communities to protect, rehabilitate, utilise and reutilise their (built) environments, landscapes, material and immaterial cultural assets and other unique values, e.g. through instruments of EU Cohesion Policy or any other tools enhancing integrated territorial or local development. |
|  | **2b. CIRCULAR ECONOMY: Strong and sustainable local economies in a globalised world** |
|  | Circularity means managing material and energy flows. It includes reusing and recycling products such as building materials based on life-cycle assessment, and energy renovation of buildings. The transition of Europe’s economies towards a place-based circular and carbon/climate-neutral economy depends on the competitiveness and assets of local and regional players. In a globalised economy, this implies a need to build industrial symbiosis processes which bring together global competitiveness and local assets. We support Europe’s transition to a circular economy and the development of place-based industrial symbiosis processes. |
|  | To better utilise Europe’s multifaceted territorial assets for the transition to a circular economy we support the development of local and regional circular economy strategies linking local and global economies. These strategies should build on local assets and the capacity to innovate and combine energy and economic transition processes for a place-based circular economy, including through smart specialisation strategies. |
|  | Local products, markets, business environments, training, entrepreneurship, increased self-sufficiency and local communities are important for resilient local economies. Diversified local economies help reduce vulnerability to external forces and assist energy and economic transition processes. We will encourage the diversification of local economies and efforts to strengthen innovation capacities in all regions, including local strategies for energy transition and measures in the building, transport and bioeconomy sectors. |
|  | **2c. SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIONS: Sustainable digital and physical connectivity of places** |
|  | Physical and digital connections are important for Europe’s societies and economies and pose major environmental challenges. Therefore, sustainable forms transport and connectivity are needed, especially to support the priorities of a balanced Europe and functional regions.  The transition to a digital society can support decentralised and sustainable developments. The possibility for e-inclusion, where people, enterprises and places benefit from digitalisation, depends on fair and affordable access to high-quality internet and next generation mobile phone connections. This particularly concerns access to e-governance and e-services of general interest affecting the quality of life and competitiveness of places. We will invite relevant players to a dialogue on the need for adequate access to high-speed internet and mobile phone networks in all places, and the need for a digital infrastructure with a low carbon footprint. This can help achieve adequate living and business conditions in all places across Europe. |
|  | In a globalised economy, access to intermodal freight and passenger transport is important for all places in Europe. To achieve climate objectives, efficient and environmentally friendly transport solutions are ever more important. This includes all transport modes individually as well as combined transport. We will further improve links between regional planning and the development of Trans-European Networks (TEN), especially along core network corridors. Linking all places with major transport nodes supports international trade connections and local development opportunities. |
|  | Secondary and local transport networks which link to transnational networks and urban centres are essential for the quality of life and for business opportunities. This is a particular concern for towns, rural, peripheral areas, islands and outermost regions. We will invite spatial and transport planners to explore new models for local and regional mobility-as-a-service and to cooperate on multimodal and environmentally friendly accessibility of and within urban centres, e.g. through instruments of EU Cohesion Policy or any other tools enhancing integrated territorial or local development. |

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|  | **IV. Putting priorities into action** |
|  | The priorities spelled out in the Territorial Agenda 2030 need to be supported by the actions of committed players. Only then can Territorial Agenda priorities and concerns over spatial inequalities be addressed appropriately. Taken together, the actions should strengthen:   * multi-level governance; * coordination of sector policies in terms of their territorial impacts and coherence; * cooperation between territories; * territorial cohesion at EU level; * territorial cohesion at cross-border, transnational and interregional level; * Member State and neighbouring countries contributions to territorial cohesion. |
|  | **Calls on key players** |
|  | Application of the Territorial Agenda relies on informal multilevel cooperation between Member States, sub-national authorities, the European Commission, European Parliament, Union Advisory Bodies such as the European Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Investment Bank and other relevant players. Application of the Territorial Agenda would benefit from cooperation with those in charge of the Urban Agenda, the revised Leipzig Charter and EU Cohesion Policy.   * **Member States jointly in intergovernmental cooperation** will strengthen cooperation on Territorial Agenda priorities at European level with the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Investment Bank. National progress reports will be discussed at the meetings of the Directors-General on Territorial Cohesion (DGTC). To strengthen dialogue on the interplay between territorial development and sector policies, DGTC meetings could include a joint session with a corresponding meeting from policy sectors of territorial relevance. * **Member States individually** will take steps to apply the Territorial Agenda and engage relevant players in all sector policies and at all levels of government. This includes promoting the Territorial Agenda in national spatial planning, Partnership Agreements and programmes for EU Cohesion Policy and other EU funds, as well as in other relevant contexts. It includes also informing about the Territorial Agenda, analysing territorial development and working towards territorial cohesion at national level together with sector ministries, sub-national authorities, and civil society players. Every second year each Member State will inform the Network of Territorial Cohesion Contact Points (NTCCP) about the progress on the application of the Territorial Agenda. * **Sub-national authorities and bodies**, including those at local and regional level and their national associations, are invited to apply the Territorial Agenda and take steps to engage relevant players. This includes considering Territorial Agenda priorities in their spatial planning and overarching development strategies and policies, as well as taking inspiration from pilot actions and coming forward with own proposals for new pilot actions. In particular they are encouraged to cooperate with neighbouring territories and places facing similar potential or challenges, and with the main actors involved. In addition, sub-national authorities are invited to take an active role in regional, national and European debates concerning the application of the Territorial Agenda. * **European Commission** is invited to contribute to the Territorial Agenda priorities and further strengthen its efforts to promote territorial cohesion in Europe, to coordinate sector policies and to intensify the territorial dimension in EU policies. This may include strengthening the territorial dimension in the European Semester and the Territorial Impact Assessments using available tools and stronger stakeholder involvement, as well as further promoting – under Cohesion Policy and other relevant EU policies – integrated territorial development, uptake of relevant tools and instruments, and territorial cooperation. * [**European Parliament** is invited to note the Territorial Agenda and to consider its priorities in the Committee on Regional Development (REGI) and other committees and intergroups which have a territorial dimension. This may include advocating Territorial Agenda priorities in EU legislative processes.] (tbc) * **European Committee of the Regions** (CoR), as the European Union's advisory body formally representing regions and municipalities at EU level, is invited to contribute to the implementation and further development of the Territorial Agenda. To this end, the CoR is in particular invited to inform its members about the Territorial Agenda and the state of play of its implementation and to encourage local and regional authorities in Europe to apply the Territorial Agenda, cooperating with neighbouring territories and places, learning from the pilot actions and coming forward with own proposals for new pilot actions. The CoR is also invited to promote through its consultative work, where relevant, the objectives of the Territorial Agenda at European level, and to promote the uptake and further development of territorial tools and instruments such as Territorial Impact Assessments (TIA), European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), and integrated territorial development under EU Cohesion Policy. * [**European Economic and Social Committee** is asked to inform its members about the Territorial Agenda priorities and encourage them to cooperate in implementing the Territorial Agenda. This includes underlining the importance of civil society partners to ensure a sustainable future for all places and strengthening CLLD and cooperation. In addition, they are asked to advocate Territorial Agenda priorities in policy debates at European level.] (tbc) * **European Investment Bank Group (EIB)** is asked to reflect the priorities and outcomes of the Territorial Agenda as appropriate in its [Cohesion] lending, grant-loan blending and advisory services approach, taking into account the need to support sustainable territorial development strategies without jeopardising its financial discipline. Since the EIB can play an important role in financing investments in areas covered by the Territorial Agenda, it is invited to contribute to pilot actions, in particular to support the development of better funding approaches in the territorial context in cooperation with the European Commission. This can include supporting place-sensitive investments through lending, grant-loan blending and advising Member States and key players about territorial project preparation and financial instruments. * **European and national associations** addressing spatial development and/or representing local and regional governmentsare invited to inform their members about the priorities of the Territorial Agenda, and encourage them to apply the Territorial Agenda, cooperate with neighbouring territories and places, learn from the pilot actions and come forward with own proposals for new pilot actions. In addition, they are encouraged to advocate the objectives of the Territorial Agenda in relevant policy debates at European level. |
|  | **Implementation through dedicated actions** |
|  | Actions putting the Territorial Agenda into practice can be taken at any governance level and can vary in character and focus. Every key player is asked to take action implementing the Territorial Agenda in the context of their regular mandate. Only then can spatial inequalities be addressed appropriately. |
|  | In addition, pilot actions showcase ways to test and develop practices which contribute to achieving Territorial Agenda priorities. These actions should mirror increasing recognition of the importance of place-based policies by showing how the territorial dimension of regional, national and European policies can be actively addressed. They could focus on learning, sharing best practices, joint working groups developing ways forward, or on implementation. To inspire actions across Europe, the agreement to the Territorial Agenda 2030 is accompanied by launching a first round of pilot actions under different leadership. Everybody is encouraged to closely follow them, take inspiration and come forward with proposals for new actions. Actions addressing priorities of both the Urban Agenda and Territorial Agenda can strengthen the link between urban and territorial policies. |
|  | **Coordination** |
|  | The activities of the Territorial Agenda will be coordinated by meetings of the Directors General on Territorial Cohesion (DGTC), prepared by the National Territorial Cohesion Contact Points (NTCCP), and supported by Territorial Agenda Working Group (TAWG). A focal point within an existing structure could support the coordination process and Presidencies of the Council of the EU in the monitoring of activities and basic communication on the Territorial Agenda.  Coordination activities of the Territorial Agenda 2030 will:   * Ensure that activities and pilot actions are transparent, conceived with and supported by (representatives of) Member States, sub-national players and the European Commission, mutually reinforcing and optimally impacting EU and national policy making; * Regularly review progress on implementation and pilot actions of Territorial Agenda 2030; * Communicate Territorial Agenda objectives and priorities as well as progress in implementation to relevant players at sub-national, national and European level. |
|  | **Follow up** |
|  | The forthcoming Presidencies of the Council of the EU are asked to follow up on the Territorial Agenda 2030 and further strengthen its communication, application and governance:   * **Communication** on the progress of the application of the Territorial Agenda and marking the occasions of the 25th and 30th anniversary of the European Spatial Development Perspective (1999) in 2024 and 2029 and the 20th anniversary of the Territorial Agenda (2007) in 2027. * **Application** of the Territorial Agenda including the national progress reports every second year, regular reports on the progress of the pilot actions and the initiation of new pilot actions. * **Governance** with a focus on the mid-term review in 2024 including reviews of the governance system, progress of the implementation and relevance of the priorities. The mid-term review will be conducted in the light of the preparations for the negotiations of the EU budget and EU Cohesion Policy post-2027. The Presidency of the Council of the EU in the first half of 2025 is invited to organise an informal ministerial meeting, informing a decision on the possible renewal of the Territorial Agenda 2030. |