

PRELIMINARY SUMMARY

Territorial Agenda 2030

A future for all places

In Europe, increasing inequalities between places and between people as well as unsustainable developments have reached a critical level. They risk undermining the basis on which the EU, its Member States and thriving municipalities and regions build their success. Therefore, it is about time for concerted action at all geographical and administrative levels to ensure positive future perspectives for all people, communities and places in Europe. This way, we seek to contribute to sustainable development and to keeping the EU together.

This is a preliminary summary of the Draft Territorial Agenda, which we, the Ministers responsible for spatial planning and territorial development, in cooperation with the European Commission and with the endorsement of the European Committee of the Regions, agree upon.

The objective of the Territorial Agenda is to ensure that the need for a sustainable future for all places and people is addressed appropriately. To do so, the Territorial Agenda provides strategic orientations for territorial development and for strengthening the territorial dimension of policies at all governance levels.

Therefore, we believe that action is needed. 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.

We therefore define two overarching objectives, a Just Europe and a Green Europe, broken down into six priorities for the development of the European territory as a whole and all its places.

Why we need to act

We have reviewed the Territorial Agenda launched in 2007 and updated in 2011, and we have taken into consideration recent developments described in various reports by the European Commission, the European Committee of the Regions, the European Investment Bank and ESPON.

Europe consists of different types of places, such as capital regions, metropolitan areas, small and medium-sized towns, rural areas, inner peripheries, peripheral areas, northernmost areas, sparsely populated areas, islands, coastal areas, mountainous areas or areas in economic transition. These places show a great variety of development potential and challenges. From the sub-local to the pan-European level, disparities between places and between people as well as environmental risks and pressures increase. Furthermore, the links and flows between different places affect a place's capacity to dwell on its 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 a transition to sustainable development and to react to the challenges of climate change. A common feature is the importance of good government and governance.

There is need to act as people and **places drift apart – increasing imbalances and inequalities** e.g. in the fields:

- Quality of life
- Services of general interest
- Demographic and societal imbalances
- Digitalisation and the 4th industrial revolution
- Employment and economy
- Interdependencies between places
- Global embeddedness

There is need to respond to the **increasing pressure concerning sustainable development and climate change** e.g. in the fields:

- Climate change
- Loss of biodiversity and land consumption
- Healthy quality of air, soil and water
- Secure, affordable and sustainable energy
- Just transition
- Circular regional value chains
- Natural, landscape and cultural heritage

Territorial priorities for Europe

The Territorial Agenda stresses the need to ensure a future for places in a just and green Europe, and defines six priorities for the development of the European territory.

A JUST EUROPE

that offers future perspectives for all places and people

BALANCED EUROPE

Better balanced territorial development utilising Europe's diversity

- We will take action to encourage neighbourhoods, municipalities, counties, regions and Member States to cooperate on improving the quality for working, living and investing in all places and strengthening economic prosperity and global competitiveness throughout Europe.
- We will invite policy makers from all levels of governance to promote polycentric development models that offer a role for all towns and cities.
- 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.

FUNCTIONAL REGIONS

Local and regional development and less inequalities between places

- We will search the dialogue with decision makers in cities of all sizes to apply an integrated multilevel governance approach. This means to involve players from different governance levels, policy sectors and groups of society.
- We will engage with local and regional decision makers to strengthen cooperation on long-term place-based strategies for urban, peri-urban, rural, peripheral and sparsely populated areas and address functional links between neighbouring areas.

INTEGRATION BEYOND BORDERS

Living and working across national 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), functional regions and legal cross-border agreements are examples of stable approaches that facilitate cooperation between different administrative areas and go beyond single cooperation projects.
- We will intensify the dialogue with policy makers at all governance levels to coordinate relevant national sector policies between countries and diminish existing obstacles to cooperation

A GREEN EUROPE

that protects our common livelihoods and shapes societal transition processes

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Better ecological livelihoods and climate-neutral towns, cities and regions

- We support the development of nature-based solutions and green infrastructure networks, that link ecosystems and protected areas, in the field of spatial planning and other relevant policies.
- We will respect the natural limits of our common livelihoods and increase the resilience of all places to the impact of climate change.
- We will concentrate our work on strengthening the awareness and empowering local and regional communities to protect, rehabilitate, utilise and reutilise their (built) environments, landscapes, cultures and other unique values.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Strong and sustainable local economies in a globalised world

- We support Europe's transition to a circular economy and the development of place-based industrial symbiosis processes.
- We will support the development of local and regional circular economy strategies linking local and global economies.
- We will take action to encourage the diversification of local economies and efforts to strengthen innovation capacities in all regions.

SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIONS

Sustainable digital and physical connectivity 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.
- We will take action to further improve the link between regional planning and the development of Trans-European Networks (TEN), as linking all places with major transport nodes supports international trade connections and local development opportunities.
- We will invite spatial planners and transport planners to explore new models for local and regional mobility as a service, and to cooperate on multimodal and environmentally friendly access to urban centres.

The Way Forward

Governance and implementation mechanisms

The priorities spelled out in the Territorial Agenda need to be supported by actions carried out by committed players. Only then the priorities of the Territorial Agenda can be addressed appropriately. To inspire actions all around Europe, the forthcoming German EU Presidency invites all Member States and interested parties to initiate pilot actions to be launched together with the agenda to strengthen

- the territorial coordination of policies;
- cooperation between territories;
- territorial cohesion at EU level;
- territorial cohesion at cross-border, transnational and interregional level;
- Member States' contribution to territorial cohesion.

Governance and implementation steps currently under development.

More information at www.territorialagenda.eu