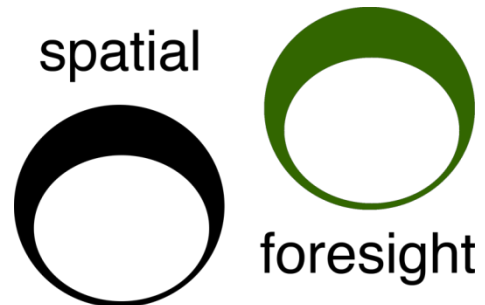


# Outlooks for Targeting Non-standard Geographies in Cohesion Policy

Erik Gløersen

Montana174 Final conference - How to foster the effective uptake  
of Cohesion Policy funds in mountain areas?

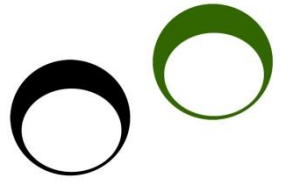
20th September 2022



territorial policy support and [research](#)

# Current State of play

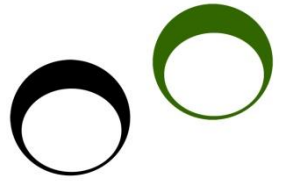
---



- Special treatment granted by Treaties:
  - Outermost Region (ES-FR-PT) (TFEU Art. 349)
  - Northern Sparsely Populated Regions (FI-SE) (Protocol 6 of 1994 Accession Treaty)
- Incitative provisions in Treaty (TFEU Art. 174)
  - islands,
  - cross- border regions,
  - mountain regions.
- Incitative provisions in ERDF and Cohesion Fund regulation (Recital 45, Art. 10)
  - Areas with population decline
- “Knocking at the door”
  - Lake regions

# Outermost regions

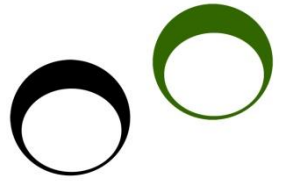
---



- Logic of compensation, « offsetting additional costs »:
  - Freight aid
  - PSO contract to support air connections
  - Transport infrastructure investments
  - Operating aid to companies
  - Residence allowance to civil servants
- Difficult coordination with “mainstream Cohesion Policy objectives”
- Extreme administrative burden in some cases

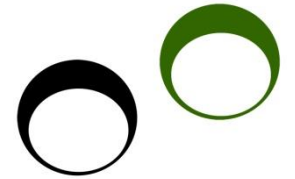
# Northern Sparsely Populated Regions

---

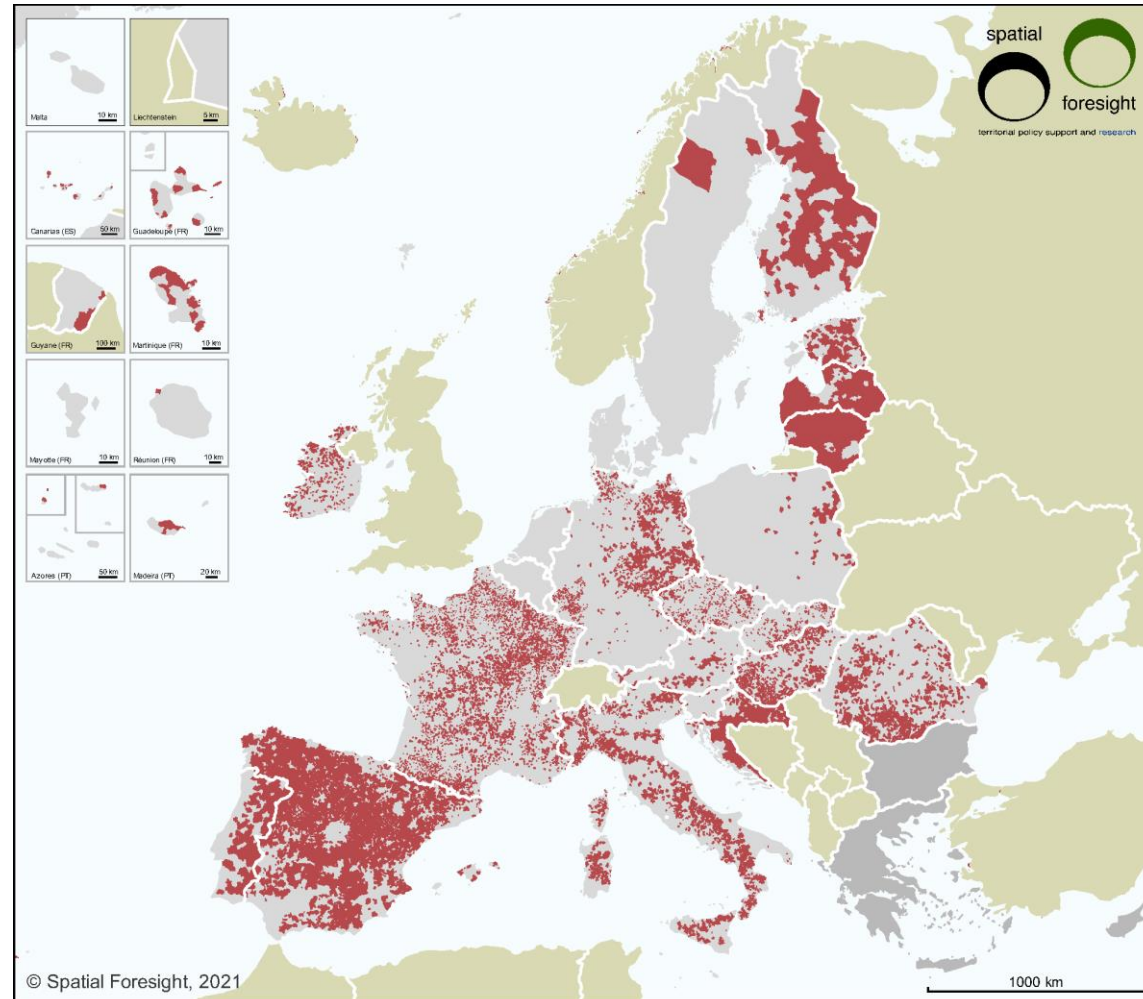


- Specific support hardly differentiated from mainstream funds
- Logic of knowledge-driven development, successfully supported by Cohesion Policy
- Population keeps declining in most sparsely populated parts
- Integrated Territorial Investments requested by local/regional stakeholders, but not implemented
- Lack of skilled workforce is a key development bottleneck

# Areas with population decline



- o ERDF criterion:  
population decline >1%  
per year  
between 2007 and 2017



Administrative boundaries: Eurostat GISCO

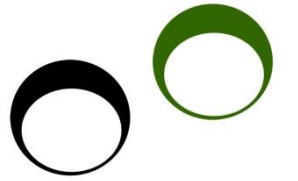
Population trends 2011-2017, except:

- Portugal: 2011-2021
- Guyane, Guadeloupe, Martinique: 2008-2018
- Mayotte: 2012-2017

Sources: Eurostat, BBSR - Bundesinstitut für Bau-, Stadt und Raumforschung (2019): Raumbewachung Europa des BBSR, Statistics Lithuania, Statistics Portugal, French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE)

# Areas with population decline

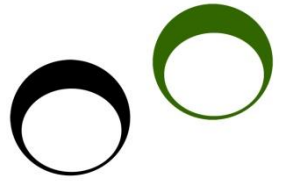
---



- Request of the Spanish government
- Different designations and “storylines” of local population decline in Member States
- Only some Member States ambition to preserve settlement patterns
- Interesting good practices:
  - Multilevel governance
  - Integrated approaches
  - Identification of development bottlenecks
- Can Cohesion Policy support “smart shrinking”?

# Lake regions

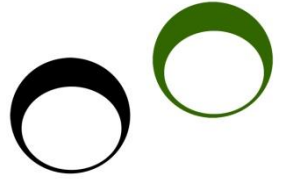
---



- Major challenges linked to climate change, biodiversity preservation
- Strengthening links between water policies (e.g. Water Framework Directive) and regional/local development
- Multiple sectoral connections: tourism, energy, agriculture, urban planning, transport, energy, nature protection
- What EU support would be purposeful?

# Outlooks

---



- Evolving categorisation of atypical geographies
- Shared understanding that the nexus of institutional, economic, social and environmental issues is influenced by geography
- EU discussions on this are maturing, focus on specificities rather than handicaps
- Territorial tools (e.g. ITIs) could play a key role but they are insufficiently promoted, often not well understood
- EU has a key role to play in setting the agenda and sharing good practices, also in relation to Green Deal implementation & impact of war in Ukraine
- Can one overcome competition between geographic specificities?