

**COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**  
**– DIRECTORATE E –**  
**Horizontal Policies and Networks**



**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**ASSESSMENT ON TERRITORIAL IMPACTS**

**Submitted by Michael Schneider (DE/EPP)**

**Michael Schneider** is the rapporteur for the CoR own initiative opinion on *Assessment on territorial impacts*. This opinion will discuss the European Commission's Staff Working Document on **Assessing territorial impacts: operational guidance on how to assess regional and local impacts within the Commission Impact Assessment system, SWD (2013) 3 final**. This questionnaire identifies important issues for the Committee of the Regions and is designed to assist in the drafting of the own initiative opinion on the assessment of territorial impacts.

Please complete and submit by **20 March 2013**. If you are member of the Subsidiarity Monitoring Network you can upload the completed questionnaire directly onto the Subsidiarity Monitoring Network website (<http://subsidiarity.cor.europa.eu> – remember to log in). Alternatively and in case you are not member of the Network, you can send it by email to [subsidiarity@cor.europa.eu](mailto:subsidiarity@cor.europa.eu).

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<b>Member of</b>	SMN Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other

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## QUESTIONS

1. The Staff Working Document states that: *"the guidance provided here also responds to a request from the Member States, expressed in the debate following the 2008 Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion and under the Polish EU Presidency in 2011 as part of the Territorial Agenda process"*.

**a) Do you consider that the document published by the European Commission meets the expectations and the ideas expressed in the political debate raised after the publication of the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion in 2008? Do you believe there is a need for greater follow-up to this debate on territorial cohesion and if yes, could you give some concrete examples?**

The document published by the Commission is too general to genuinely contribute to guiding assessment activities and to demonstrate the true knowledge-building potential of territorial impact assessments.

There is a need for greater follow-up to the debate and the practice of assessment should be more widely disseminated, also in the case of territorial impacts.

Nevertheless, it is important for assessment activities to gain support in particular among their beneficiaries, and therefore among decision and policy makers, rather than among academics and experts. In Italy, awareness of assessment practices is particularly scant.

To this end, it is important for assessment activities to take a practical form and for their findings to be adequately disseminated. However, up to now, more attention seems to have been given to modelling than to the decisions actually taken on the basis of the assessments carried out.

2. In order to better coordinate the territorial impact of sectoral EU policies, there needs to be a better understanding and measurement of those impacts. The Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion already focused on this point, stating that "improving territorial cohesion implies better coordination between sectoral and territorial policies and improved coherence between territorial interventions".

**b) Do you believe that the European Commission's proposal can be an effective instrument able to improve coordination between EU sectoral policies having territorial impacts? In your view what else should/could be done?**

When assessing territorial impacts, provision should be made in the assessment research projects for the different territorial levels, including the local level.

3. The Staff Working Document provides operational and methodological guidance on how to answer a range of questions regarding the potential territorial impact of a given proposal. Nevertheless, it underlines that assessing territorial impacts is not mandatory, and states that it is just a tool that can be helpful to enhance the policy coherence of some policy proposals.

**c) Do you consider that territorial impact assessments should be made compulsory for those sectoral policies having a territorial impact? If yes, in your opinion for which sectoral policies should the assessment of territorial impacts be made mandatory?**

Making assessment compulsory in the absence of culture change will not deliver the desired outcomes.

Impact assessment should be supported, incentivised and rewarded, and there may be a need for minimum quality standards.

4. The Staff Working Document states that a territorial impact assessment should be carried out when the proposal explicitly focuses on specific territories or when the proposal risks of having a large asymmetric territorial impact (outlier impact). It also highlights different methods that can be used to assess territorial impacts. In particular, it mentions qualitative and quantitative analysis. These tools and methodologies should be used by the different Directorates-General at the European Commission when preparing territorial impact assessments for proposals they are responsible for.

**d) Do you consider the data, methodology and tools proposed for supporting territorial impact assessments (such as ESPON ARTS<sup>1</sup> or QUICKScan) are sufficient to measure the potential territorial impacts a given proposal could have in your region? Would you propose any other type of tools/methodology?**

**e) Do you believe the complexity of territorial impact assessments require them to be carried out by a single specialised entity (one-stop shop) or do you prefer the idea of a decentralised system as proposed in the Staff Working Document?**

Assessment should be decentralised. All authorities should have the capacity to manage assessment activities

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu\\_Projects/Menu\\_AppliedResearch/arts.html](http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Projects/Menu_AppliedResearch/arts.html).

5. Multilevel Governance and partnerships are key factors in the implementation of territorial cohesion, focussing on strengthening a place-based approach. The Committee of the Regions has already asked for the assessment of specific territorial impacts and recalls the potential role<sup>2</sup> of the CoR in assisting the European Commission in the process of Impact Assessment as well as to be associated to some of the EC's initiatives towards improvements in the capacity building of regional and local authorities<sup>3</sup>.

**f) What should the specific measures providing for the involvement of local and regional authorities be in these exercises?**

**g) What role do you see for the Committee of the Regions in this context?**

f) The participation of regions and local authorities is decisive.  
The establishment of a network of assessors/experts offering a range of training, a panel of experts and a platform for sharing experiences and good practices could be an important resource.  
Integration between the modelling which has already been developed and existing European statistical resources could constitute a support platform.

6. The Committee of the Regions has already asked for territorial cohesion to be strengthened in relation to the EU2020 Strategy. One possibility for this could be not to confine the assessment of territorial impacts to legislative proposals and to extend them to other documents, such as key planning documents, such as the Annual Growth Survey.

**h) Do you think there should be a territorial dimension of the EU2020 policy cycle?**

**i) Do you consider the Annual Growth Survey (as a key planning document for the launch of the annual EU2020 policy cycle) should contain a territorial impact assessment?**

**j) In your opinion, should Territorial Impact Assessments also be carried out at Member State level?**

h) Yes

i) -

j) Yes

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<sup>2</sup> See section 5.5 of the EC's Staff Working Document: "Under the Protocol on Cooperation between the Commission and the Committee of the Regions (2012) the Commission services may ask for support from the Committee in preparing its assessment.

<sup>3</sup> CdR 353/2010, CoR Opinion on Smart Regulation.