

# **The Urban Dimension in Territorial Governance Processes**

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the framework of the ESPON 2.3.2 project (“Governance of territorial and urban policies from EU to local level”) a model of territorial governance has been proposed, seen as a process of actors’ organization and co-ordination aiming at developing territorial capital in a non destructive way in order to improve territorial cohesion at different levels.

In this paper, taking into account the results of the ESPON 2.3.2 experience, there will be a specific focus on five interrelated issues – vertical coordination, horizontal coordination, involvement, participation, and place-specific actions – paying attention to the city-wide and metropolitan level. The first issue, vertical coordination, directly regards the process of multi-level governance and the involvement of public actors in the interaction with the current devolution processes in most European countries, the changing role of the State and the proper application of the vertical subsidiarity as promoted by the EU. The second issue regards horizontal subsidiarity processes that help to coordinate policies and strategies at the same territorial level.

City-wide and metropolitan dimension though need also to refer to non-strictly organizational dynamics that deeply influence territorial governance processes. This is the case of the other three issues analyzed:

- the involvement of public and private actors representing organised interests (stakeholders or actors that can make their voices heard);
- the widespread participation of “common” citizens, whatever their role and typology; the processes;
- and the definition of place-specific actions as results of governance processes.

Different case studies analyzed during the ESPON 2.3.2 experience will be reconsidered according to the above mentioned issues to highlight methods, models and practices of territorial governance in some European cities.

**Key Words:** place/territory, governance, multi-level